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Janina Ramirez on unearthing lost women of history

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hever castle.co.uk

Stonehenge remains one of Britain's most popular tourist attractions, with special tours offered daily

Welcome

In this issue's cover feature we look at the origins of Stonehenge, why it was built and how it was used by ancient Britons. I also quite enjoy pondering what followed: few structures in the world can claim to have survived so many events of history. Stonehenge has survived (some disrepair notwithstanding) invasions, civil wars, industrialisation and two world wars. It is a direct connection from those of us who live in Britain today to the people who lived on the island in neolithic times. Standing amid any historic structure can be quite a heady experience, but Stonehenge is on a different level, hence our unceasing interest in it.

We welcome Owen Jarus to walk us through the construction, from the methods used to build it to how it was adopted by later communities, such as the druids who still mark the solstices today. He also brings us up to date with all of the latest research and archaeological data about this revered landmark.

It was also a pleasure to chat with renowned historian Dr Janina Ramirez to discuss her passion for the past, why she thinks it's important to elevate the stories of lost women in history and the challenges she's faced as a public figure. It's a great conversation that we've long wanted to set up so I'm delighted we can share it with you now.

As always, I hope you enjoy it.

Jonathan Gordon
Editor

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Cover images
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Photography and illustration
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Group Marketing Director, Magazines & Memberships **Sharon Todd**

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Printed by Wyndeham Peterborough, Storey's Bar Road, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE1 5YS

Distributed by Marketforce, 5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5HU www.marketforce.co.uk Tel: 0203 787 9060

ISSN 2052-5870

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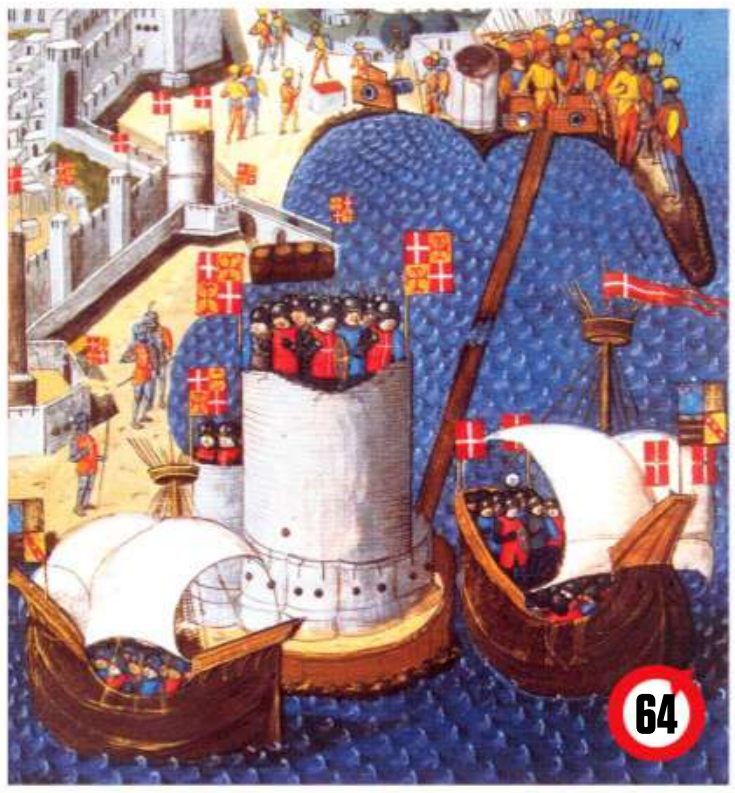

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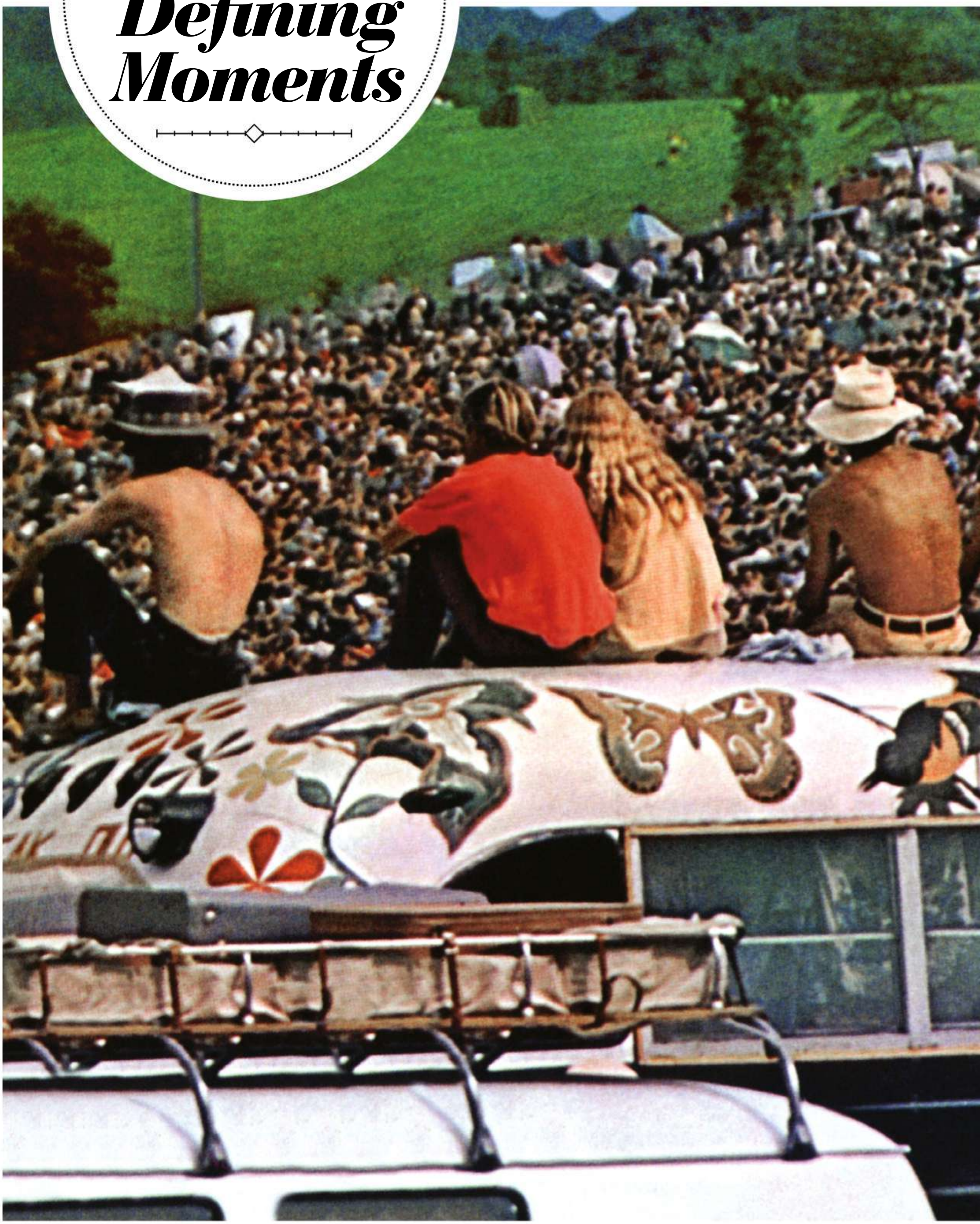
Secrets of Stonehenge

From ceremonial site to sun calendar, find out how and why this ancient monument was built

Defining Moments



© Alamy

15-18 August 1969

WOODSTOCK FESTIVAL

The Woodstock Music and Art Fair, held on a dairy farm in Bethel, New York, was one of the defining events of the 1960s counterculture revolution. The festival attracted about 400,000 people to watch performances from artists such as Joe Cocker, Janis Joplin and Jimi Hendrix, who performed his legendary version of *The Star-Spangled Banner*.

© Alamy

25 July 1978

THE FIRST TEST TUBE BABY IS BORN

Louise Joy Brown, the first baby in the world to be conceived by IVF, was born at the Royal Oldham Hospital in the UK. Louise's birth was controversial and her parents, Lesley and John, were subjected to intense media scrutiny, as were the gynaecologist and scientists behind the success, Patrick Steptoe, Robert Edwards and Jean Purdy.

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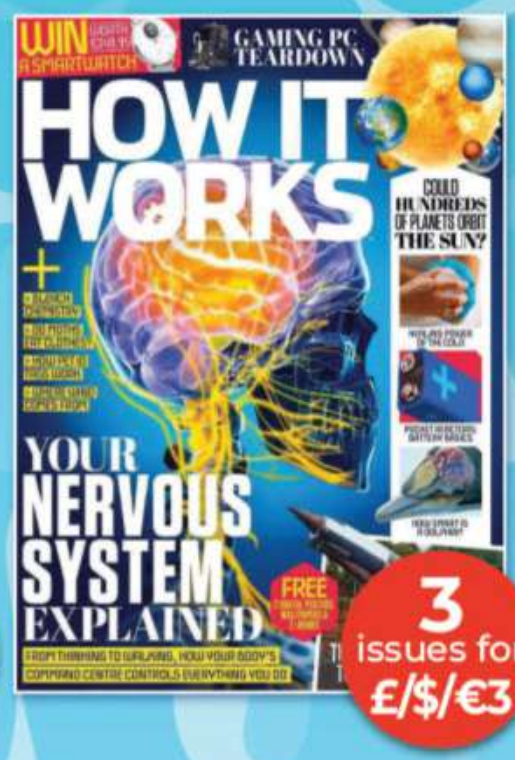

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ALL ABOUT

WEIMAR GERMANY

Inside the turbulent era of avant-garde art and fraught political upheaval between World War I and the rise of the Nazis

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QUEER CULTURE IN WEIMAR GERMANY

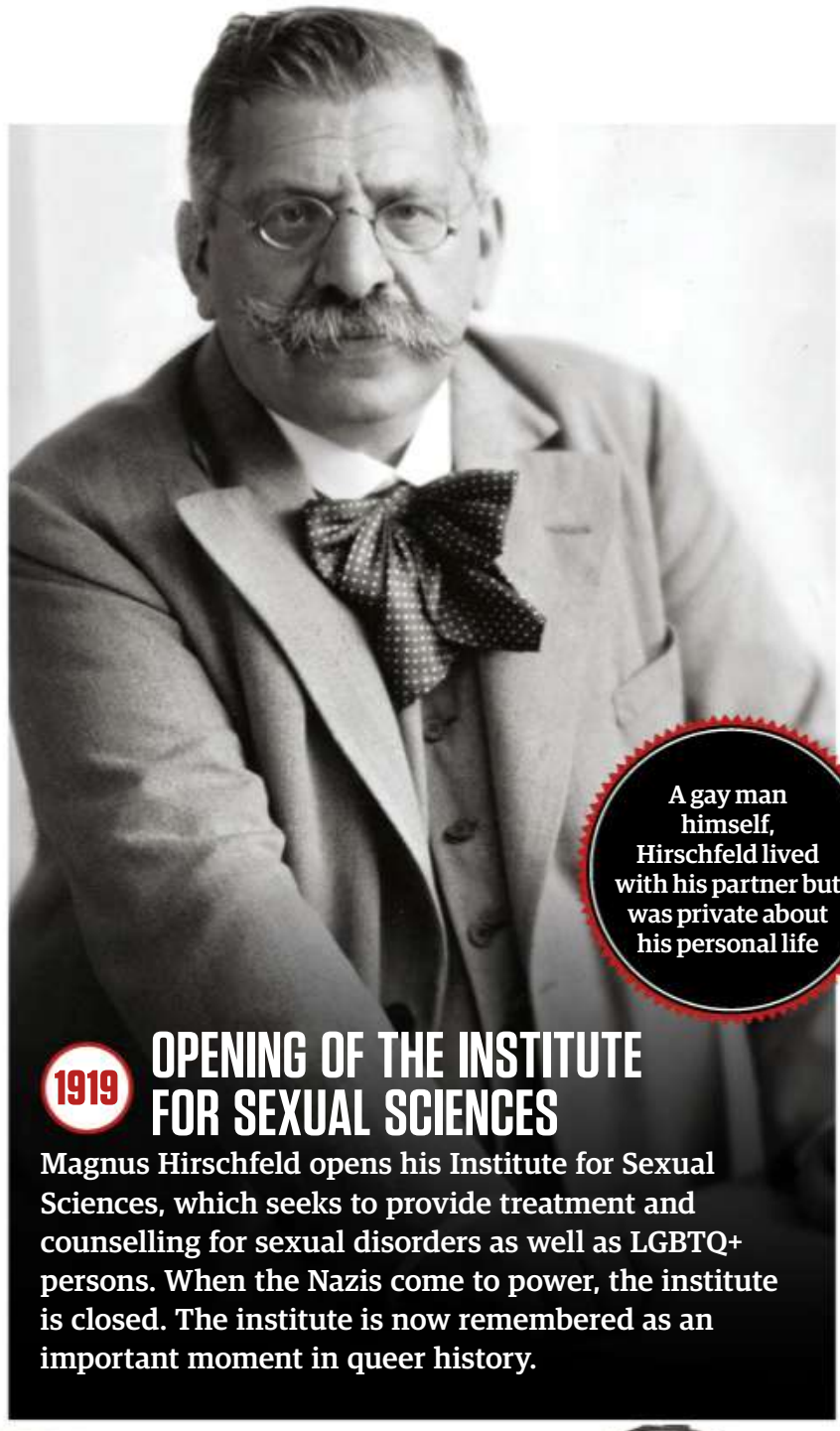
Main image source: © Getty Images

Written by Callum McKelvie, Emily Staniforth, Jonathan Gordon

Key Events

1919 SPARTACIST UPRISING

Marxist leaders Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, founders of the Spartacus League, oversee an uprising against the government. However, the revolution is unorganised and the widespread support for communism on which it relied proves non-existent. Luxemburg and Liebknecht are killed.



A gay man himself, Hirschfeld lived with his partner but was private about his personal life

1919 OPENING OF THE INSTITUTE FOR SEXUAL SCIENCES

Magnus Hirschfeld opens his Institute for Sexual Sciences, which seeks to provide treatment and counselling for sexual disorders as well as LGBTQ+ persons. When the Nazis come to power, the institute is closed. The institute is now remembered as an important moment in queer history.

GERMANY SIGNS THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES 1919

This controversial armistice signed at the end of WWI imposes a number of reparations on Germany. The fall-out from this treaty will cast a long shadow over Weimar Germany.

NAZI PARTY FOUNDED 1920

Hitler becomes a leader of the National Socialist German Workers' Party and establishes at 25-point programme that becomes the party's only platform.

DAWES PLAN 1924

Named after American Charles C Dawes, the Dawes Plan helps reorganise the payment of reparations and arranges for a loan. This resolves the hyperinflation crisis.

WEIMAR CONSTITUTION 1919

Friedrich Ebert passes the Weimar Constitution into law, effectively making the first parliamentary democracy in Germany. This creates a publicly elected president with power over a chancellor, who manages the government.

HYPERINFLATION 1923

Complications surrounding the payment of war reparations and the French invasion of the Rhineland lead the government to print more money, causing a huge rise in inflation.

BAUHAUS MOVES TO DESSAU 1925

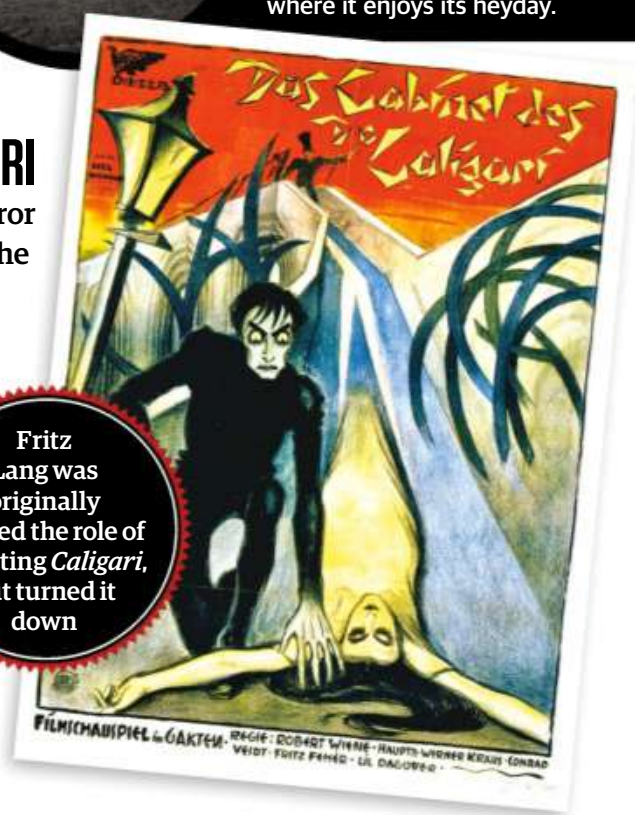
Forced to leave Weimar for political reasons, the school of design founded by Walter Gropius relocates to Dessau, where it enjoys its heyday.

1920 KAPP PUTSCH

Named after the right-wing politician Wolfgang Kapp, this armed uprising seeks to replace the Weimar government with a new one led by Kapp. Despite successfully seizing Berlin, a general strike by workers shows a lack of support and it's defeated.

1920 THE CABINET OF DR CALIGARI

Robert Wiene's silent horror film is a key moment in the Expressionist movement, which stretches across art, literature, theatre and film. The film has been hailed as one of the first art films as well as the first horror film.



Fritz Lang was originally offered the role of directing *Caligari*, but turned it down

1923 MUNICH PUTSCH

A meeting of a right-wing politicians is interrupted by Nazi Party members, led by Adolf Hitler. After a fierce speech the group declare they will march on Berlin and install General Ludendorff as leader. A group of 3,000 Nazis clashes with police but are defeated. Hitler is sentenced to five years but serves only nine months.

By 1923, the Nazi party had more power than before, with 55,000 members at its disposal

FRIEDRICH EBERT DIES 1925

Most likely to have been voted president once again in the upcoming election due to his prior success, Friedrich Ebert dies unexpectedly.

METROPOLIS 1927

Fritz Lang directs one of the most famous films of the silent era, a sprawling tale of a vast futuristic city where workers toil under controlling overlords.

UNEMPLOYMENT AT ITS HIGHEST 1932

Further economic crises and hardships caused by the Wall Street Crash of 1929 lead to vast unemployment, which reaches its peak in 1932.

1928

1933

HINDENBURG BECOMES PRESIDENT 1925

Field Marshal Hindenburg, 77, is elected as president of Germany due largely to his popularity as a First World War hero.

THE YOUNG PLAN 1928

This plan further reduces the German war reparations and revises the Dawes Plan of 1924. However, the depression of 1929 will make Germany unable to complete these payments.

GERMAN ELECTIONS 1932

The Nazi Party makes considerable gains through a number of elections, particularly following the Federal Election of July, where it becomes the largest party in the Reichstag but is unable to obtain a majority.

1928 KELLOGG-BRIAND PACT

Two years after joining the League of Nations, Weimar Germany is one of 31 countries to sign the Kellogg-Briand Pact outlawing war. Although the pact is ultimately ineffective, Germany's inclusion is a demonstration of how it has returned to the diplomatic stage.

1933 ADOLF HITLER NAMED CHANCELLOR

Following a series of electoral victories by the Nazi Party, President Hindenburg names Adolf Hitler the new chancellor of Germany and head of a coalition government. In a matter of weeks he invokes Article 48, which allows him to pass the Enabling Act, giving Hitler total control.

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

BAUHAUS DESSAU BUILDING

Germany
1926

The Bauhaus movement has been described as one of the most influential art schools of the 20th century. Established in Germany in 1919, it encouraged the collaboration of artists to create rational and functional works of art that spanned across artistic disciplines. The culmination of this ideal can be seen in the Bauhaus Dessau, a building that housed an art school while being a piece of art in its own right. Designed by the movement's founder, architect Walter Gropius, the Bauhaus building in Dessau wasn't actually the first centre of the movement, with Gropius having established Bauhaus in Weimar. However, it was the location in which the ideals of Bauhaus were realised.

Financed by the city of Dessau, the Bauhaus building became a Gesamtkunstwerk (total work of art). The students here were taught a wide range of disciplines, including fine art, performing arts and applied art. Architecture, painting, textiles, pottery, photography and metalwork were all on offer, with styles characterised by a coherent, functional aesthetic specific to the Bauhaus movement. The renowned abstract painter Wassily Kandinsky taught at the Bauhaus school from 1922 until its closure.

The Dessau building was forced to close in 1932 by the National Socialist German Workers' Party (also known as the Nazi Party). The Bauhaus school moved to Berlin under the directorship of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, where an old warehouse was refurbished to house it. However, Bauhaus continued to be pressured by the Nazis, who claimed the school promoted communist ideologies. The school voluntarily closed in 1933 and many of its teachers fled to the United States. As for the Dessau building, it was made a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1996. Refurbishments repaired the damage done to the building when it was bombed during World War II and it is now open to the public, hosting workshops and exhibitions.

FLAT ROOF
The roof of the Bauhaus building was flat so it could be a space to walk on. The entire complex was designed to be a functional and usable space, so it makes sense that the roof served a dual purpose. The roof was covered in asphalt tiles and because flat roofs were a new concept at the time, drainage and waterproofing were a challenge.

STEEL FRAMEWORK
A huge steel framework upheld the glass curtain wall. This could be seen through the glass throughout the workshop wing by people looking into the building. However, from a distance the dark grey steel could not be seen, giving the illusion of an entirely transparent facade. Part of the integral structure of the building being visible exemplified the functional style of the Bauhaus school of art.

INTERIOR
The interior of the Bauhaus building was completed entirely by students of the school. The painting workshop decorated the interior and the light fixtures were made by the metal workshop. Incorporating the work of Bauhaus students reinforced the movement's concept of collaboration across art forms and ensured the entire building was a product of the Bauhaus school.

WORKSHOPS
The workshops were key to Gropius' design as they allowed the site to function as a school teaching a wide range of art forms. The three-storey wing which housed the workshops was connected by an auditorium to the studio building where students lived. The workshops were home to a wide range of classes including weaving, performing arts and graphic printing.

© Alamy
Inside the Bauhaus building as it looks today

ADMINISTRATIVE AREA

Having not had access to an office previously, Walter Gropius ensured that the new Bauhaus at Dessau was equipped with enough office spaces for himself and the various masters employed there. The administration wing connected to other areas of the school and meant everything needed for the staff was in one place and close to the workshops.

ACCOMMODATION

An accommodation wing was incorporated into the design by Gropius. It was one of the three distinctive wings of the building, which were all connected. The accommodation section was made up of five storeys and housed students at the Bauhaus as well as junior masters. Tourists can now pay to stay overnight at the Bauhaus building.

LAYOUT

The asymmetric pinwheel layout of the building was a huge part of the visual aesthetic of the complex. When the building opened in 1926, the first issue of the Bauhaus magazine was published to coincide with the opening and included an aerial photograph of the site, showcasing the pinwheel structure. Gropius felt the building needed to be seen in its entirety for it to be fully appreciated.

SIZE

The huge complex covers 10,535 square metres, while the inside of the building itself contains around 23,280 square metres of space. The building was big enough to house 13 workshops and 28 studios for students to live in. Though an influential movement, the Bauhaus only educated around 1,250 students during its 14 years in operation. Many of them spent time working at the Bauhaus Dessau.

GLASS CURTAIN WALL

The glass walls of the Bauhaus building are its defining architectural feature. Placed along the workshop wing, the 'curtain' wall exposes a steel framework as well as the interior of the building. While the light exposure provided by the glass walls was architecturally beautiful, it did cause issues with insulation. It was too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter, so textile curtains had to be added to help regulate the temperature inside the building.

BAUHAUS SIGN

The white lettering on the front of the building is the only piece of decoration on the entire structure. Made by students of the school's print workshop, the letters epitomise the Bauhaus movement's desire to combine functionality with art.

Illustration by: Adrian Mann

Anatomy

THE NEW WOMAN

Germany 1918-33

TOP HAT

A top hat was famously worn by Marlene Dietrich, an icon of the Weimar Republic and a symbol of the emancipated woman during the period. The top hat allowed the New Woman to combine the feminine with the masculine, and was a bold fashion statement.

HAIR

The fashionable shorter bob hairstyle of the New Woman helped to further subvert societal expectations of women in this period. A traditional marker of femininity, long hair was chopped in favour of more practical and visually striking hairstyles, which were a symbol of empowerment for women in a patriarchal society.

NIGHTLIFE

As a result of rapid social change in Germany's major cities, an eclectic entertainment industry evolved. In Berlin, late-night venues housed nightclubs and cabarets that attracted the custom of the New Woman, as well as providing a haven for marginalised communities. Women also began to perform in these venues.

FASHION

No longer constrained by traditionally conservative feminine clothes, women's fashion in Weimar Germany expanded to reflect the expanding rights and growing independence of the New Woman. It was not uncommon for women to wear tailored or oversized suits, or to wear dresses with a much shorter skirt or lower neckline.

A NEW ERA

After women in Germany were given the vote in 1919, the New Woman was born. Symbolising the emancipation of women, the New Woman subverted the traditional expectations of what femininity should be, resulting in new fashions and lifestyles for women across the country who were ready for change.

A WORKING WOMAN

The New Woman could be characterised by her employment as well as her appearance. Having taken jobs during the war to support the men on the frontline, women continued to seek employment in typically male professions. Women were able to be self-sufficient and career-focussed, and as a result the pressure to marry decreased.

ARTISTIC LICENCE

Female performers and artists subverted feminine norms through their unconventional work. They challenged the idea that women should be graceful and quiet. For example, Valeska Gert's performance art told stories of social relevance through varied and expressionist movements. She is credited with paving the way for the punk movement.

Illustration by: Kevin McGivern

Historical Treasures

THE 500 MILLION REICHSMARK NOTE

One of several high denominations printed during hyperinflation Weimar Germany, 1923-1924

During World War I, the value of the Reichsmark had fallen considerably. By 1919 one British pound was equal to 250 Marks, whereas in 1914 it had been equal to 20. By the early 1920s, the colossal reparations imposed by the Allies began to have an effect on the German economy and inflation rose rapidly. When the Weimar government announced that it would be unable to continue paying reparations, France and Belgium sent troops to occupy the Ruhr – the industrial heartland of Germany. Although the intention of these forces was to take what was owed in natural resources, the workers at the various factories and mines refused to cooperate. With the supply of goods now severely reduced, prices rose and the government felt compelled to print more money to help with the escalating crisis. However, it was this decision that led to a situation of hyperinflation.

Numerous stories abound of the effect of this financial crisis on ordinary Germans. Many would have to rush to the bakery as soon as they had withdrawn their money in order to obtain basic necessities such as bread because to wait until the end of the day would see the currency devalue even further. Photographs from the time show children building toy houses using packets of worthless notes as the bricks. The speed with which the value of the Reichsmark decreased was astronomical: in January 1923 one US Dollar was worth 17,000 Marks, and by December this had shot to 4,200 trillion Marks.

As the situation spiralled out of control, the Weimar government desperately attempted to stop it from escalating any further. Gustav Streseman, elected as the new chancellor in 1923, attempted to improve international relations in the hope of eventually revising the Treaty of Versailles. He began by paying the reparations and ordering the striking workers back. The Rentenmark, a new currency, was introduced. Worth 10,000,000,000,000 Reichsmarks, it had a rate of 4.20 to the US Dollar and helped to establish confidence. By 1924, American economist Charles Dawes instigated a plan that helped reduce the amount of reparations owed and arranged an international loan of 800 million Marks.

HIGHER AND HIGHER

In an attempt to cope with the ever-rising crisis, the Reichsbank would print higher and high denominations, leading to the note you see here. The largest denomination available was the 100,000,000,000,000 (100 Trillion) Reichsmark note.

Reichsbanknote
Einhundert
Billionen Mark
ZAHLT DIE REICHSBANKHAUPTKASSE IN BERLIN GEGEN DIESE BANKNOTE DEM EINLIEFERER. VOM 1. JANUAR 1924 AB KANN DIESE BANKNOTE AUFGERUFEN UND UNTER UMTAUSCH GEGEN ANDERE GESETZLICHE ZAHLUNGSMITTEL EINGEZOGEN WERDEN
BERLIN, DEN 1. SEPTEMBER 1923
REICHSBANKDIREKTORIUM
WER BANKNOTEN NACHMACHT ODER VERFÄLSCHT, ODER NACHGEMACHTE ODER VERFÄLSCHTE SICH VERSCHAFFT UND IN VERKEHR BRINGT, WIRD MIT ZUCHTHAUS NICHT UNTER ZWEI JAHREN BESTRAFT
SO-4
238807

LEFT Bank notes became so worthless that children would use them as toy bricks

BLAME GAME

When the situation stabilised, the emerging Nazi Party used the now worthless notes as pieces of propoganda. They drew antisemitic cartoons on them and wrote slogans blaming Jewish people for the country's problems, distributing these across the republic.

DEAD LETTERS

To put these enormous denominations into perspective, bread, which in January 1923 cost 250 Reichsmarks, cost 250 million by November. The highest-priced stamp cost five billion Reichsmarks – this would still not have been sufficient to post a standard letter.

STILL WORTHLESS

Today these notes, like much old currency, can still be found. However, despite their age and historic importance today these notes are still worth very little. A 1000 Reichsmark bill will often fetch between £1 or £2 on websites such as eBay.

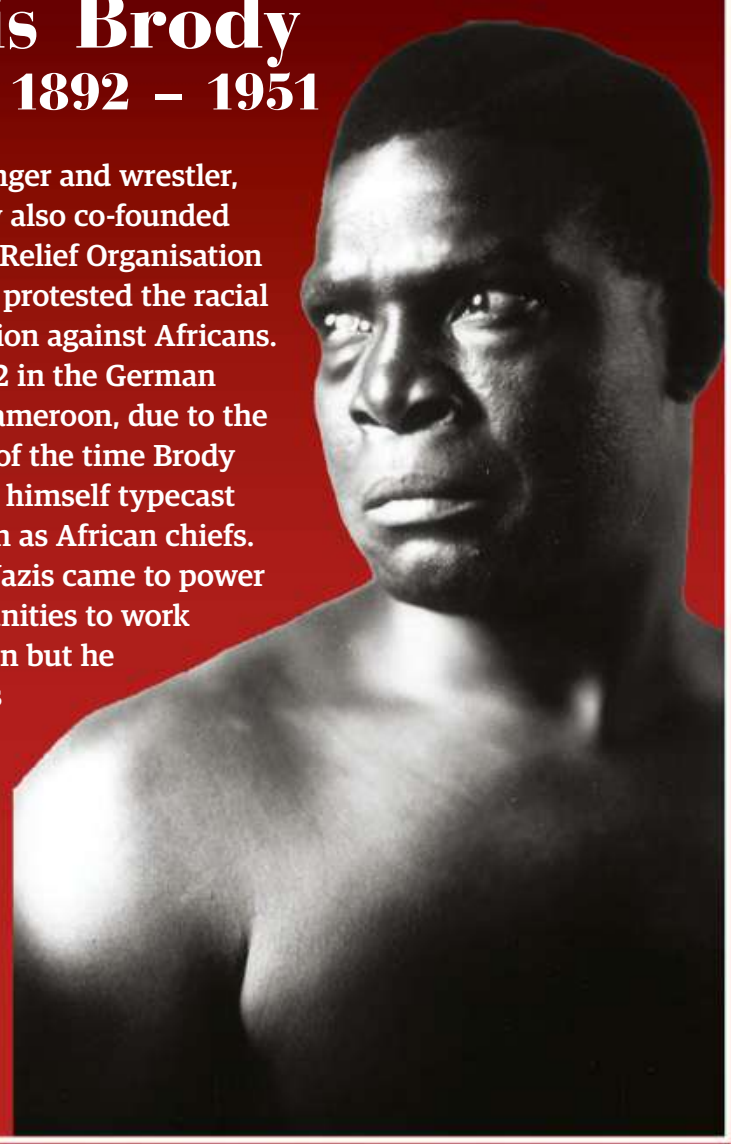
2x © Alamy

Hall of Fame

ARTISTS OF THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC

From writers to actors, photographers to singers, here are ten of Weimar Germany's most renowned artists

Louis Brody
Actor, 1892 – 1951



An actor, singer and wrestler, Louis Brody also co-founded the African Relief Organisation that openly protested the racial discrimination against Africans. Born in 1892 in the German colony of Cameroon, due to the limitations of the time Brody often found himself typecast in roles such as African chiefs. When the Nazis came to power the opportunities to work slowed down but he nonetheless continued acting. He worked tirelessly to improve the rights of Africans.

HANNAH HÖCH
ARTIST, 1889 – 1978

Prior to the end of WWI, Höch became connected to a group of German artists known as the Dadaists. These artists celebrated artistic luck and irrationality, and Höch soon became renowned for her complex photomontages. Höch found that due to her gender, she was often subject to patronising attitudes by her male colleagues. She often commented on femininity and the role of the woman in society, particularly that of the 'New Weimar' woman. Although Höch was unable to exhibit her work during World War II, she nonetheless remained in Germany and created her art in secret. Prior to her death in 1978, celebrations of her immense contribution to German art and in particular the avant-garde movement were held in Paris and Berlin.

LIL DAGOVER
ACTOR, 1887 – 1980

One of the most famous and popular of Germany's silent film stars, Lil Dagover is perhaps best recognised for playing Jane in *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari*. She also worked with directors such as Fritz Lang. Unlike other silent film stars, her rich voice allowed her to successfully make the transition to sound. In 1931 Dagover attempted a career move to Hollywood, but proving unsuccessful she returned to Germany and made several films under the Nazi government.

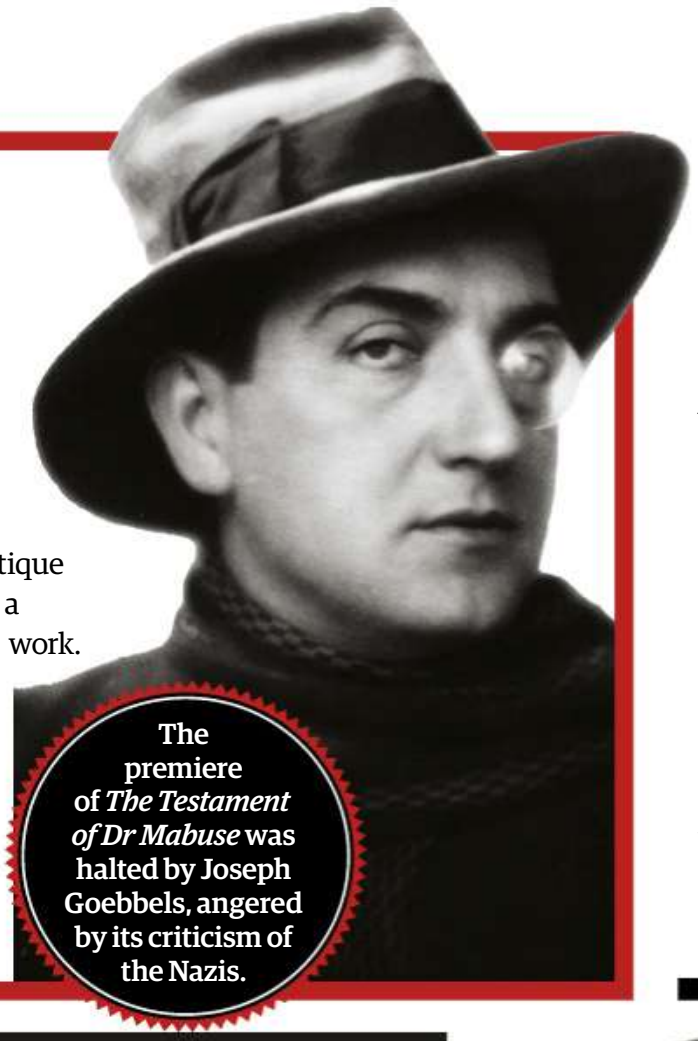
Aenne Biermann
Photographer, 1898 – 1933

Biermann was a central figure in New Objectivity photography, which rejected more fantastical or romantic compositions in favour of capturing the world in a clear and objective way. Born to a wealthy Jewish family in 1898, she was also a keen amateur mineralogist and photographed specimens for the geologist Rudolph Hunt. Between 1926 and 1932 she was increasingly productive and created a vast number of important works and held numerous exhibitions. Biermann died in January 1933 of liver disease, and despite being incredibly popular only 400 prints out of roughly 3,000 negatives survive.

Biermann was prompted to try her hand at photography in 1920 by her children following an argument with a portrait photographer.

Fritz Lang
Director, 1890 – 1976

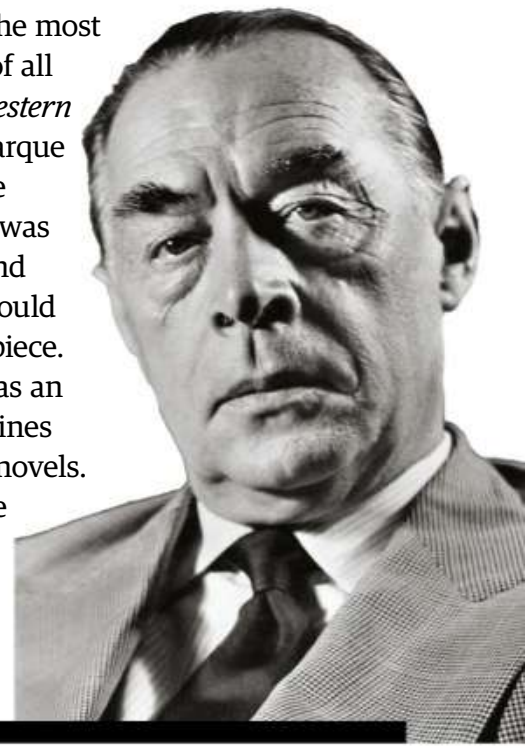
Considered one of the pioneers of cinema, Fritz Lang was born in 1890 and began his career in filmmaking in 1918 as a writer. He quickly moved to directing and soon found success, his 1922 film *Dr Mabuse: The Gambler* proving something of a national sensation as well as a critique of Weimar Germany. In 1927 he made *Metropolis*, a science fiction film and perhaps his most famous work. In 1931 he moved to 'talkies' with the serial killer film *M*. Lang left Germany following the rise of the Nazis. He would continue working in Hollywood, where he directed *The Big Heat* (1953), among numerous others, before returning to Germany. *The Thousand Eyes of Dr Mabuse* (1960) was his last before his death.



The premiere of *The Testament of Dr Mabuse* was halted by Joseph Goebbels, angered by its criticism of the Nazis.

ERICH MARIA REMARQUE
AUTHOR, 1898 – 1970

The author of perhaps the most famous anti-war novel of all time, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, Erich Maria Remarque was born in 1898. At the start of World War I, he was drafted into the army and his experiences there would inform his 1929 masterpiece. Prior to this he worked as an editor on several magazines and wrote a number of novels. Following the rise of the Nazis his books were banned and burnt, and Remarque fled to Switzerland.



FW Murnau
Director, 1888 – 1931

The director of such classics as *Nosferatu* (1922) and *Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans* (1927), FW Murnau is considered one of the key figures of Weimar cinema. The young Murnau was discovered by the director Max Reinhardt but it was not until after World War I that he became a director. Unfortunately, due to their age and the flammability of early nitrate film stock, a number of Murnau's films have been lost.

CLAIRE WALDOFF
CABARET SINGER, 1884 – 1957

A popular cabaret singer, Claire Waldoff was known for her trademark sharp suits, rough vocal tones, adult songs and sense of humour. She was open about her sexuality and hosted a gay/lesbian salon with her life partner, Olga von Roeder (known by the nickname Olly). Waldoff, like many cabaret performers, was targeted by the Nazi regime and often found her work censored due to its 'political content'.

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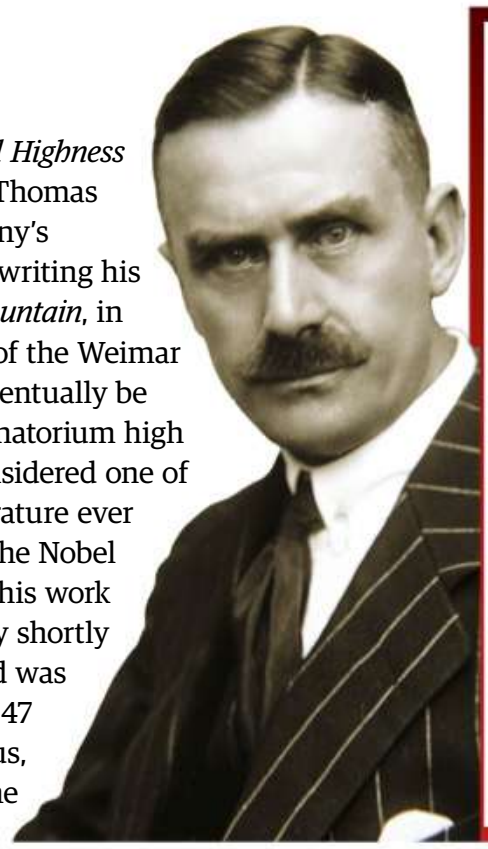
THOMAS MANN
AUTHOR, 1875 – 1955

The author of such works as *Royal Highness* (1909) and *Death in Venice* (1913), Thomas Mann is considered one of Germany's leading literary figures. He began writing his most famous novel, *The Magic Mountain*, in 1912 but it was during the height of the Weimar Republic, in 1924, that it would eventually be published. Set in a snowbound sanatorium high in the Swiss Alps, the novel is considered one of the greatest works of German literature ever written. In 1929 he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, principally for his work *Buddenbrooks*. Mann left Germany shortly after the rise of the Nazi Party and was formally expatriated in 1936. In 1947 he would retell the story of Faustus, metaphorically commenting on the last days of the Third Reich.



Conrad Veidt
Actor, 1893 – 1943

The star of *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari*, Conrad Veidt was one of the silent screen's biggest names. He began his acting career in 1919's *The Spy*, before *Caligari* allowed him to demonstrate his unique acting style. By the end of the 1920s he was already working across Europe and in America, with 1927's *The Man Who Laughs*. From 1933 onwards he worked in Britain and America, actively championing the war effort when WWII broke out. During this period he worked on films such as *The Thief of Baghdad* (1940), with perhaps his most famous role being Major Strasser in the classic *Casablanca* (1942).

Veidt was actually the highest paid actor in *Casablanca*, with a salary of $25,000 for five weeks' work.

Q&A

THE REPUBLIC AND LGBTQ + HISTORY

Professor Katie Sutton, an expert on German culture, gender and sexuality, discusses Weimar queer and trans culture

Queer culture is often depicted as 'flourishing' during the Weimar period, how true is this?

Queer culture really did take off in new and exciting ways after the end of the First World War in Germany, with new clubs, bars, magazines and political organisations. It was the era of writer Christopher Isherwood declaring in his diaries that "Berlin meant boys," of the glamorous Marlene Dietrich and rough-and-ready Claire Waldoff singing songs about "best girlfriends."

These years also saw some of the world's earliest dedicated LGBTQ magazines, with titles like *The Island* or *Girlfriend* or *The Third Sex*, often featuring nude or semi-dressed pinups, sensuous poems as well as more political content. But we also see that queer and trans people often faced a much more threatening and violent reality out on the streets.

What are some of the origins of this culture?

This culture didn't just spring out of nowhere. The Weimar queer scene built on the efforts of much earlier activists such as Swiss author Heinrich Hössli, who in the 1830s wrote a book called *Eros* on male-male love in ancient Greece, or Karl Heinrich Ulrichs and Karl Maria Kertbeny in the late 1860s, who wrote political manifestos and came up with new labels for same-sex and gender-diverse identities like 'urning' and 'homosexual'. The Scientific Humanitarian Committee, founded in Berlin in 1897, was one of the first political LGBTQ organisations, and campaigned to abolish the criminal Paragraph 175 that outlawed male same-sex acts.

Katie Sutton is associate professor of German and Gender at the Australian National University. She has published on gender and queer and trans subcultures in the Weimar era and on sexology and psychoanalysis.

What forms did this culture take?

There are so many great examples here, it's hard to know where to start! There was a popular cabaret song called the *Lavender Song*, which proudly and subversively proclaimed that "we are, after all, different from those others/ who have only loved in lock step with morality." There are also a number of iconic queer films from this era. The 1919 silent film *Different from the Others* was probably the first queer rights film ever made, about a gay violinist played by Weimar heartthrob Conrad Veidt who falls victim to a blackmailer because of Paragraph 175. The 1931 film *Mädchen in Uniform* is about a girl named Manuela in a strict and repressive Prussian boarding school who falls in love with one of her teachers and is driven to despair when the teacher, under pressure, breaks off contact. These are sad films, but they express hope that progressive laws and kinder alternatives to strict authoritarian systems might bring better times for both queer and straight people. There were heaps of queer bars, restaurants and social clubs during this period – there was estimated to be around 100 just in Berlin by 1923. The Violetta was a favourite lesbian club that met twice a week in the Zauberflöte (Magic Flute) and hosted lecture evenings, a

Photo courtesy of: Katie Sutton

RIGHT A scene with Conrad Veidt and Reinhold Schünzel from the 1919 queer-focused film *Different from the Others*

ABOVE A group of women and trans persons at the Eldorado nightclub

sport group, excursions and a regular Transvestite Ball for gender-diverse folk. Famous clubs like the Eldorado attracted a mixed trans, queer, and celebrity and tourist population – it was the kind of venue that featured in popular 'slumming guides' to the city for people keen to enjoy a taste of Berlin's hedonistic reputation.

Who are some key queer figures from the Weimar period?

Someone I find really fascinating is Lotte (sometimes Lothar) Hahm, born in Dresden and later an activist and founding member of various Berlin lesbian and transvestite associations. We don't know if Hahm would have identified today as queer or trans, both or neither, but they had a very sexy, assertive transmasculine aesthetic and were a hugely popular host of regular nightclub events with tantalising titles like A Night in Paradise featuring cream-puff eating competitions. During the Nazi period Hahm was sent to a concentration camp, but later released, and became active again in the queer scene of post-World War II West Berlin.

During the Weimar period how much does queer culture transcend being a subculture and pass into the everyday?

In my research I've been particularly interested in how 'masculine' styles for women crossed barriers of straight and queer culture in a big way, especially in the mid 1920s. Women of all classes and sexual identities cut their hair into short Bubikopf bobs, donned suits, trousers and 'boyish' straight dresses and skirts; they also joined sporting clubs and moved into previously male jobs. While a lot of this gender-bending was playful and celebrated as flirtatious and modern in the Weimar popular media, German women's so-called 'masculinisation' could also be a focus for more serious and sometimes reactionary fears: about a falling birth rate, the collapse of gender norms and a society in disarray. The masculine female styles made it easier for transmasculine people, butch lesbians and gender-diverse people to find themselves reflected in Weimar popular culture, at least up to a point – unabashedly queer styles were sometimes also targets of ridicule. Styles became much more feminised again by the late 1920s.

What is the legacy of the Weimar period on queer culture?

Weimar queer politics was far from perfect, and in thinking about Weimar queer culture our image has often been coloured by how we want to remember this period, especially knowing about the terrible persecution of queer and trans as well as Jewish, Sinti and Roma, disabled people and people of colour after the Nazis seized power in 1933. The evidence we have on Weimar queer organisations shows that there was often conflict in the scene, as there still is today. We also know that people living in the bigger cities who were white and middle-class had much better access to the clubs and social organisations of 1920s Berlin, Hamburg or Cologne than others. We can look to this period and be reminded of how we still face the problem of people within our own queer communities being marginalised who are not white, middle-class, cisgendered or able-bodied. We look to Weimar for evidence that our queer and gender-diverse present has a long and colourful history, and it absolutely does. But we need to look with our eyes open and acknowledge the difficult as well as the fabulous aspects of the queer and trans past.

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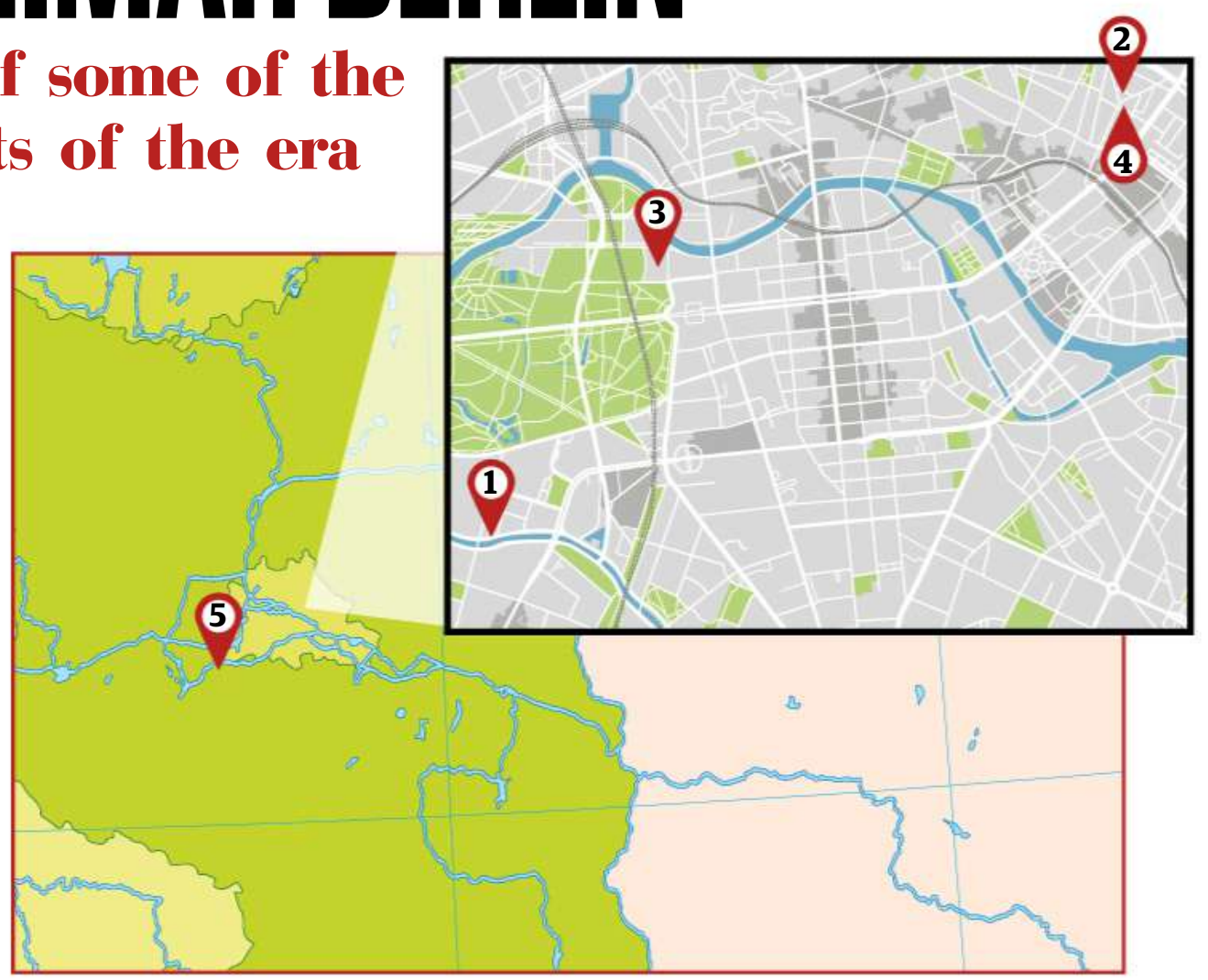
REDISCOVER WEIMAR BERLIN

The city was at the heart of some of the great events and movements of the era

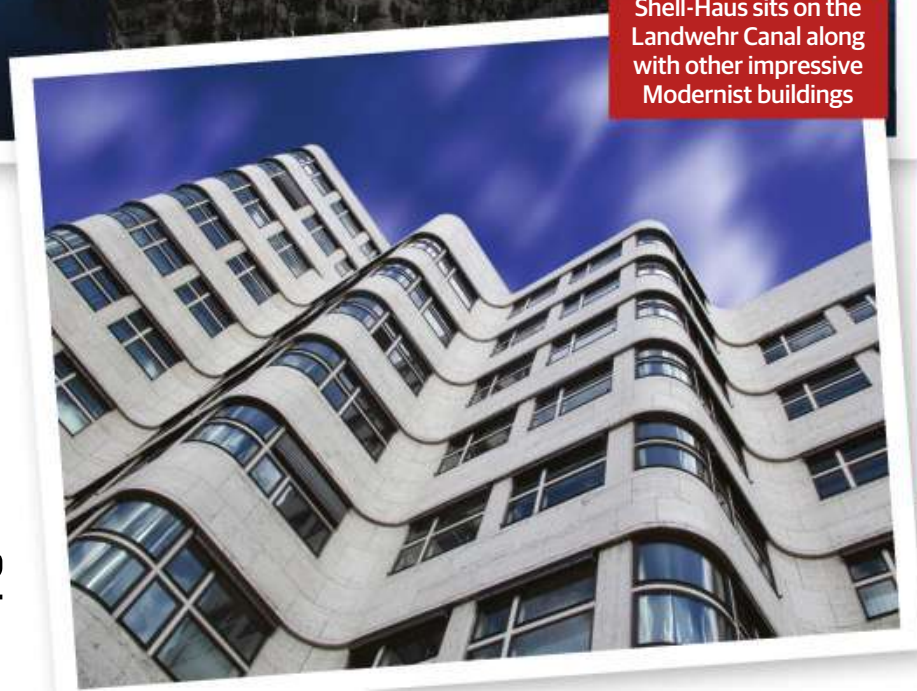


1 SHELL-HAUS
REICHPIETSCHUFER 60-62, BERLIN

Designed by Emil Fahrenkamp, Shell-Haus (simply translating as Shell House) was built for the oil company of the same name between 1930 and 1932, but its journey began in the late 1920s. Shell's parent company wanted an imposing and impressive new office in Berlin and opened up to offers, with Fahrenkamp from the Düsseldorf Academy of Art given his chance. He was known for more conservative designs, but this was far more adventurous. The 'wave' design of the building required state-of-the-art methods of construction, and the limestone used on the facade was imported from Italy. It was one of the first steel-framed high-rise buildings in Berlin.

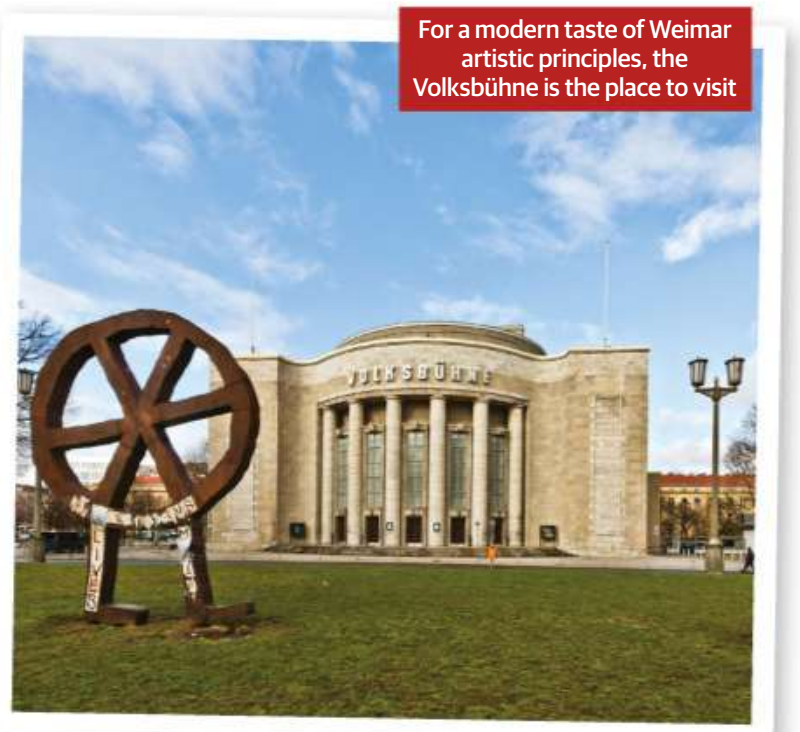
Like many buildings in Berlin from this era, it was badly damaged during WWII and left in disrepair for some time. It was listed in 1958 and refurbishment began in the 1990s, with the quarry in Italy being reopened to supply new travertine cladding. It was reopened in 2000.

Shell-Haus is now an office of the Federal Ministry of Defence so is not open to the public, but it sits close to other buildings of architectural interest so is worth travelling to view.



Shell-Haus sits on the Landwehr Canal along with other impressive Modernist buildings

2 VOLKSBÜHNE
ROSA-LUXEMBURG-PLATZ, BERLIN



For a modern taste of Weimar artistic principles, the Volksbühne is the place to visit

While this theatre was built in 1914, its legacy as a space for controversial, groundbreaking and experimental performances dates from the 1920s and the peak of Weimar artistic creativity. With artistic director Erwin Piscator at the helm, the theatre put on works that emphasised political themes with bold productions involving sound and set design that sometimes placed more emphasis on message than on emotional resonance. This could involve mixing media, such as showing news reels in the background of plays or blaring an air-raid siren.

In the early years of Nazi rule Piscator left Germany for the USSR and then New York, where he headed a drama workshop. Meanwhile, the Volksbühne was badly damaged in the war and rebuilt in the 1950s while under East German control. Its legacy for innovative theatre was maintained through this era and continues to this day with modern productions and many German theatre stars making appearances.

The box office is open daily between 12pm and 6pm. Some performances offer English subtitles, so it's worth checking that out in advance.

The Reichstag is one of the most storied buildings of the 20th century

3 REICHSTAG BUILDING
PLATZ DER REPUBLIK 1, BERLIN

Originally built during the German imperial period, the building took its name from the 'Imperial Diet' of the Reichstag that met in its halls from 1894 to 1933. The neo-Renaissance design was developed by Paul Wallot, who was also the architect of the Palace of the President that was built in 1904. In 1933, about a month after Adolf Hitler was installed as chancellor by the German president, a fire at the Reichstag became a catalysing event for the growing power of Nazism. Hitler used the fire to push through new powers as chancellor, creating an increasingly authoritarian state, leading ultimately to a Nazi dictatorship.

The building was left in disrepair through the war, when it received further damage, and beyond, but restoration work was started in the 1970s. For a while it was a museum of German history, but after the reunification of West and East Germany a more concerted rebuilding effort began. The huge glass dome was remade with a spiral ramp that leads people up to the roof. Since 1999 it has also been the seat of the lower house of the German legislature, the Bundestag.

You need to register online ahead of your visit to get access to the German Bundestag dome, with tours every 15 mins and the last at 9:45pm.

4 KINO BABYLON
ROSA-LUXEMBURG-PLATZ, BERLIN

Built in 1929 during a boom in German cinema as the 'talkie' era was taking hold, the Babylon has stood as a monument to the early days of film ever since. At the time there were over 5,000 cinemas in Germany and nearly 400 in Berlin alone. Originally it had an orchestra pit and organ to play during screenings of silent films, although these were removed during a 1948 renovation. In the early 1930s, the cinema's projectionist, Rudolf Lunau, used the projection room to hold meetings with a resistance cell against the Nazi regime until he was arrested in 1934.

The Babylon hosts the annual Berlin International Film Festival

During the Cold War the cinema was situated in East Berlin and would screen state films and documentary programmes. After reunification it was closed and in danger of structural collapse, but a restoration project from 1999 helped to keep the Babylon alive and restored the organ for silent films.

The cinema has screenings every day, many of which are free to attend, although most will be German-language only.

5 EINSTEIN TOWER
ALBERT-EINSTEIN-STRASSE, POTSDAM

Taking us out of Berlin a little, just to the southwest in Potsdam, you'll find Einstein Tower, named after the famous theoretical physicist. The building was designed by Erich Mendelsohn and is an observatory that continues to be used for research to this day. The original purpose of the building was to help gather the data to prove Albert Einstein's theory of relativity. While Mendelsohn had many limitations placed on his design, since its function was much more important than its form, he still wanted to create something unique.

From 1920 to 1921, he created a building that relied on reinforced concrete as its inspiration to create curves and slopes around the structure. This material allowed him greater flexibility of design while still giving him the support needed to make the housing for the all-important technical equipment. Post-war supply issues meant he also had to rely on brick covered with stucco for a uniform look. There's more to the observatory than what you see above ground too, as it has an attached underground laboratory system as well.

Einstein was apparently not much of a fan of the design, being more reserved in his tastes, but what Mendelsohn called 'dynamism' and others referred to as a form of architectural Expressionism was a huge influence on later architects.

You can visit the tower at any time of day to admire the architecture, but you can only access inside for guided tours in winter when the telescope is not being used by researchers.

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The Einstein Tower is now used to measure the sun's magnetic fields

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SECRETS OF STONEHENGE

From ceremonial site to sun calendar, find out how and why this ancient monument was built

Written by Owen Jarus

Illustration by: Kevin McGivern

Stonehenge is a massive stone monument on a chalky plain north of the modern-day city of Salisbury, England. Research shows that the site continuously evolved over about 10,000 years and new discoveries continue to be made, revealing a complex landscape that scholars are still trying to understand.

Many other ancient megalithic structures have been discovered all around the world. While many of them are thought to be older, some are bigger and a few, arguably, are more historically important, Stonehenge remains by far the most famous – a household name that attracts curious visitors from all over the planet.

ABOVE A dramatic illustration of Stonehenge showing how it may have looked shortly after its construction

BELOW We've been able to discern a lot about the methods for the construction of Stonehenge

All images © Getty Images

Technologies such as ground-penetrating radar and electromagnetic induction surveys are revealing the remains of structures located beneath the surface, allowing for new discoveries to be made about the landscape that Stonehenge is located in. Additionally, advances in the analysis of plant, animal and human remains are allowing scholars to learn more about the people who built and used Stonehenge. However, despite all these advances it's still not clear what Stonehenge was used for.

Building Stonehenge

The structure that we call Stonehenge was built between roughly 5,000 to 4,000 years ago. It was constructed at a time before writing was used in the British Isles, meaning that modern-day scholars have to rely heavily on archaeological remains to understand the monument.

Around 3500 BCE a rectangular enclosure about 3km (1.9 miles) long was built to the north of where Stonehenge would be erected. It's called a 'cursus' because the person who discovered it in the 18th century, William Stukeley, thought that it was a Roman chariot racing track and called it a cursus (a Roman name for circus). Today we know that this is not true and, while the purpose of the

cursus is not clear, it was built millennia before the Romans arrived in Britain.

Around 3000 BCE a circular ditch was dug around what would be Stonehenge along with a series of 56 holes – sometimes called 'Aubrey holes' after their 18th century discoverer John Aubrey. These holes may have held timber posts or bluestones, but this is uncertain. It's possible that the heel stone, which is located outside the entrance to Stonehenge, was placed around this time but this is also uncertain.

Around 2500 BCE Stonehenge changed: a series of sarsen stones was erected in the shape of a horseshoe, with every pair of these huge stones having a stone lintel connecting them. A ring of sarsens surrounded the horseshoe, their tops connecting to each other, giving the appearance of a giant interconnected stone circle surrounding the horseshoe. The 'altar stone', as it is now called, was placed in the middle of the horseshoe. This stone is a large slab of greenish old red sandstone that was brought from Wales. The altar stone's purpose is another mystery.

The sarsens are up to nine metres (30ft) tall and weigh on average 22.6 metric tons. It is widely believed that they were brought from Marlborough Downs, a distance of 32km (20 miles) to the north.

"It would have been very easy for builders to find stones like these. The Marlborough Downs... has vast numbers of stones, even today," says David Nash, a physical geography professor at the University of Brighton who has studied the sarsen stones extensively. Two circles of bluestones were placed between the circle of sarsens and the sarsens in the shape of a horseshoe. Also, four 'station stones', as they are now called, were erected outside of Stonehenge.

Around 2300 BCE Stonehenge underwent another change as the bluestones were rearranged. One circle of bluestones was placed between the outer circle of sarsens and the sarsens in the shape of a horseshoe. Meanwhile another circle of bluestones was placed within the horseshoe. Around this time an 'avenue' was built connecting Stonehenge with the River Avon.

The bluestones (so named because they have a bluish tinge when wet or freshly broken), weigh up to 3.6 metric tons and come from several different sites in western Wales, having been transported as far as 225km (140 miles), according to Richard Bevins, a geologist at the National Museum of Wales. This was the last major construction phase that took place at Stonehenge. As time went on the monument fell into neglect and disuse, some of its stones fell over, while others were taken away.

There is an interesting connection between the nearby Cursus monument and Stonehenge. Archaeologists found that the large 3km-long Cursus monument had two pits, one on the east and one on the west. These pits, in turn, align with Stonehenge's heel stone and the avenue.

"Suddenly, you've got a link between [the Cursus monument] and Stonehenge through two massive pits, which appear to be aligned on the sunrise and sunset

A LESSER HENGE?

Gobekli Tepe in Turkey is a far older megalithic monument that is, arguably, more important than Stonehenge

While Stonehenge is the most famous megalithic monument in the world – a household name that most people know – it is certainly not the oldest. In fact, it can also be argued that it is not the most important megalithic site.

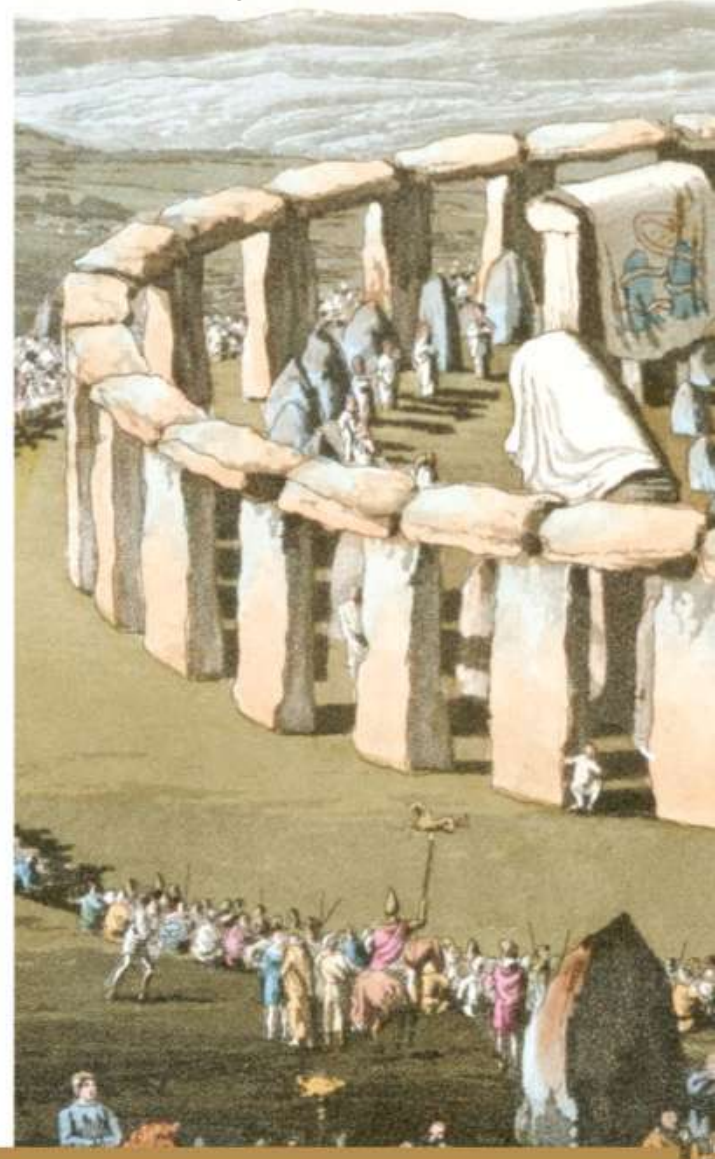
The site of Gobekli Tepe in southern Turkey was built about 11,000 years ago and has T-shaped pillars that have carvings of animals, people and abstract symbols. Study of artefacts found at the site indicate that people travelled long distances from across the region to visit the site.

Sprawling over about eight hectares (20 acres), it was constructed using a geometric plan and is one of the earliest monuments ever constructed by humans. Some scholars regard it as being the world's oldest known temple.

It was built by hunter-gatherers at a time before humans were growing crops on any substantial scale. Prior to its discovery in 1994 many scholars believed that hunter-gatherers at this time would not have been able to build a structure like this.

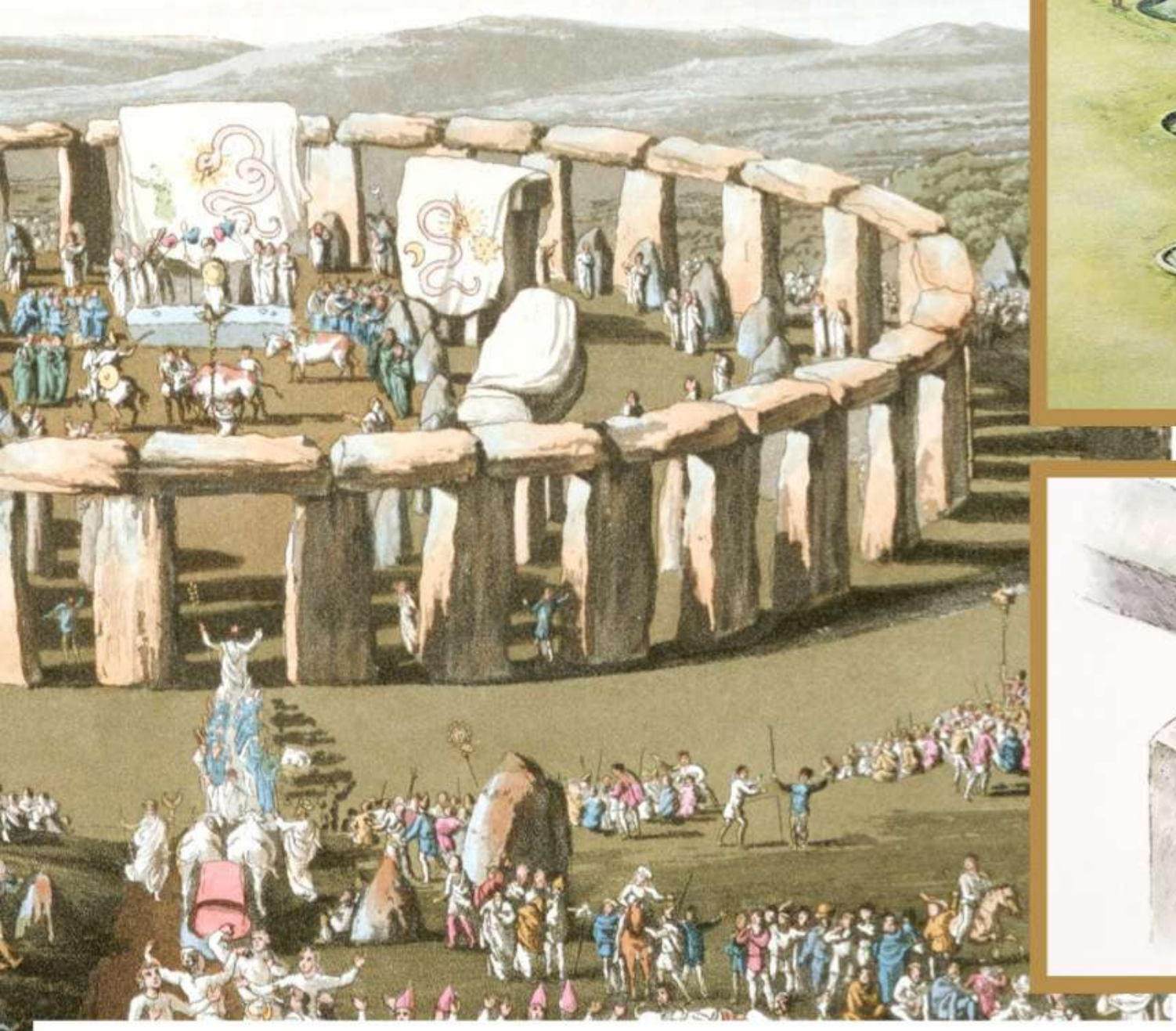
While Stonehenge is an amazing site it is much younger than Gobekli Tepe and was built at a time when agriculture was widely used.

A depiction of what Stonehenge might have looked like with all of its stones standing



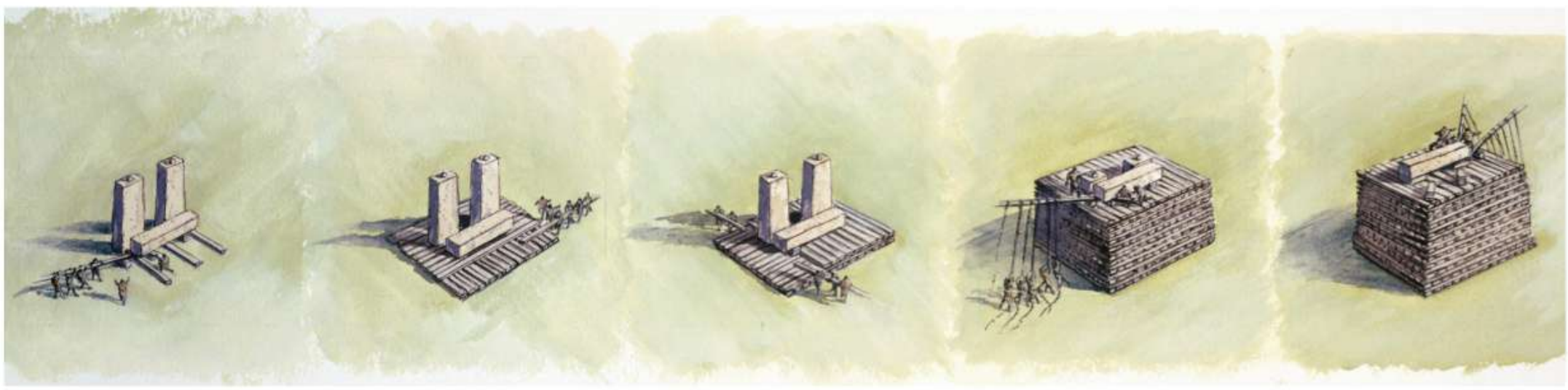
ABOVE While druids have been heavily associated with Stonehenge for centuries, it's not believed they had a hand in its construction

"If it was one of the spiritual centres of your religion why wouldn't you want to be buried there?"



LEFT Examples of the kind of burial mounds that would have been around Stonehenge

BELOW This is how the sarsen circle joints worked to keep the henge together, locking the upright stones to the lintels above



on the mid-summer solstice," explains University of Bradford archaeologist Vincent Gaffney, who is leading a project to map Stonehenge and its surrounding environs.

There are several other solstice alignments at the ancient monument. For instance, during the summer solstice the sun rises behind the heel stone and its first rays shine into the heart of Stonehenge. When the largest trilithon in the monument was standing (it has now collapsed) the sun would have set between the narrow gap of these uprights during the winter solstice.

The Workers

Some of the people who built Stonehenge may have lived near the monument at a settlement excavated at Durrington Walls. A circle of wooden posts was recently found at this site, and there is also evidence of feasting at Durrington Walls but not at Stonehenge itself, according to Richard Madgwick, a senior lecturer in archaeological science at Cardiff University.

Madgwick's research on pig bones at Durrington Walls has revealed that people brought pigs from all over Britain to hold feasts. Few animal bones have been found at Stonehenge itself, suggesting that people preferred to feast a bit away from the site.

"Feasting would have been an important part of what happened in the Stonehenge landscape and probably an important part of mobilising people for its construction," explains Madgwick.

It's unknown how people moved the bluestones from western Wales. An experiment conducted in 2016 by researchers at University College London show that it is possible for a one-ton stone to be moved by a dozen people on a wooden trackway, but whether this technique was actually

ABOVE An example of how the heavy lintel stones could have been raised

All images: © GettyImages

used is uncertain. A 2019 study in the archeology journal *Antiquity* suggested that pig lard could have been used to grease any trackway used, making it easier to move the stones. The weather itself may also have helped the builders move the blocks. "The wet winter weather would also have helped keep them [the stones] slippy," explains Barney Harris, a researcher who has written about the labour it would have taken to build Stonehenge in his doctoral thesis.

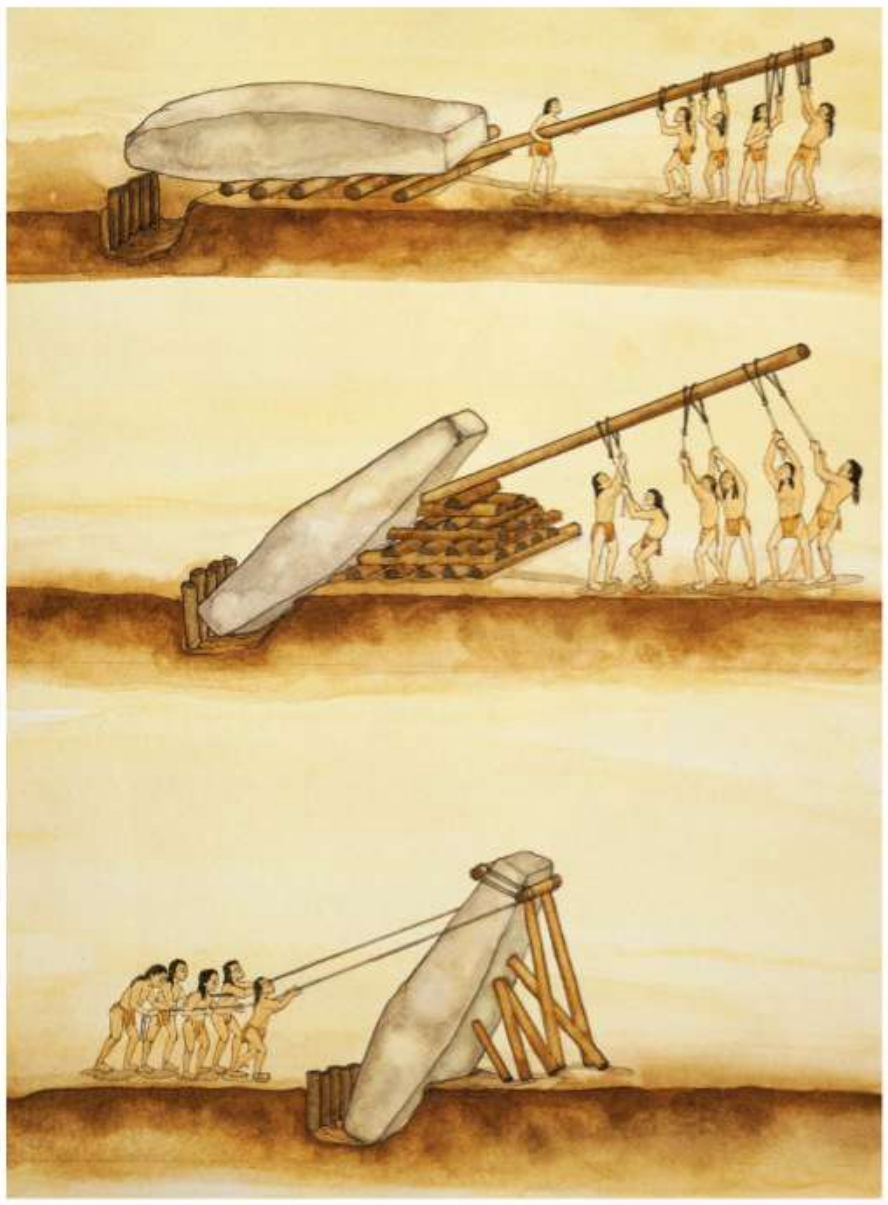
Another possibility is that glaciers during the last ice age moved some of the bluestones closer to Stonehenge, meaning that the builders didn't have to bring them all the way from Wales. However, this idea has not found much support among archaeologists.

Water transport by raft is another idea that has been proposed but researchers now question whether this method was viable. Bevins' team found that 55 percent of the bluestones come from a place called Carn Goedog in western Wales that is far enough away from waterways that it would have made transport by raft difficult.

Harris estimates that it would have taken 810,000 hours of labour to move the bluestones from western Wales, and he says to move the sarsen stones from Marlborough Downs and erect them at Stonehenge would have taken about 5.3 million hours of labour.

"The building crew was probably a mixed bunch, encompassing a diverse array of individuals including women and children," says Harris. "They likely lived, feasted and laboured together on the construction of Stonehenge on a seasonal basis." He believes that a smaller group of people likely designed Stonehenge and supervised its construction.

Research conducted by members of the Stonehenge Riverside Project found that the workers who built Stonehenge consumed a diet that included beef, pork, nuts, fruit and dairy to give them the strength for their extremely arduous work. Meanwhile Susan Greaney, an archaeologist and senior properties historian at English Heritage, says that nuts and fruit may even have been cooked with meat fats to make "a great 'energy bar', full of calories."



ABOVE
A recreation of the kinds of tools and utensils available to neolithic Britons

LEFT
Raising the upright stones would have been a challenge with neolithic technology, but not impossible

"JUST THE WORK ITSELF, REQUIRING EVERYONE LITERALLY TO PULL TOGETHER, WOULD HAVE BEEN AN ACT OF UNIFICATION"

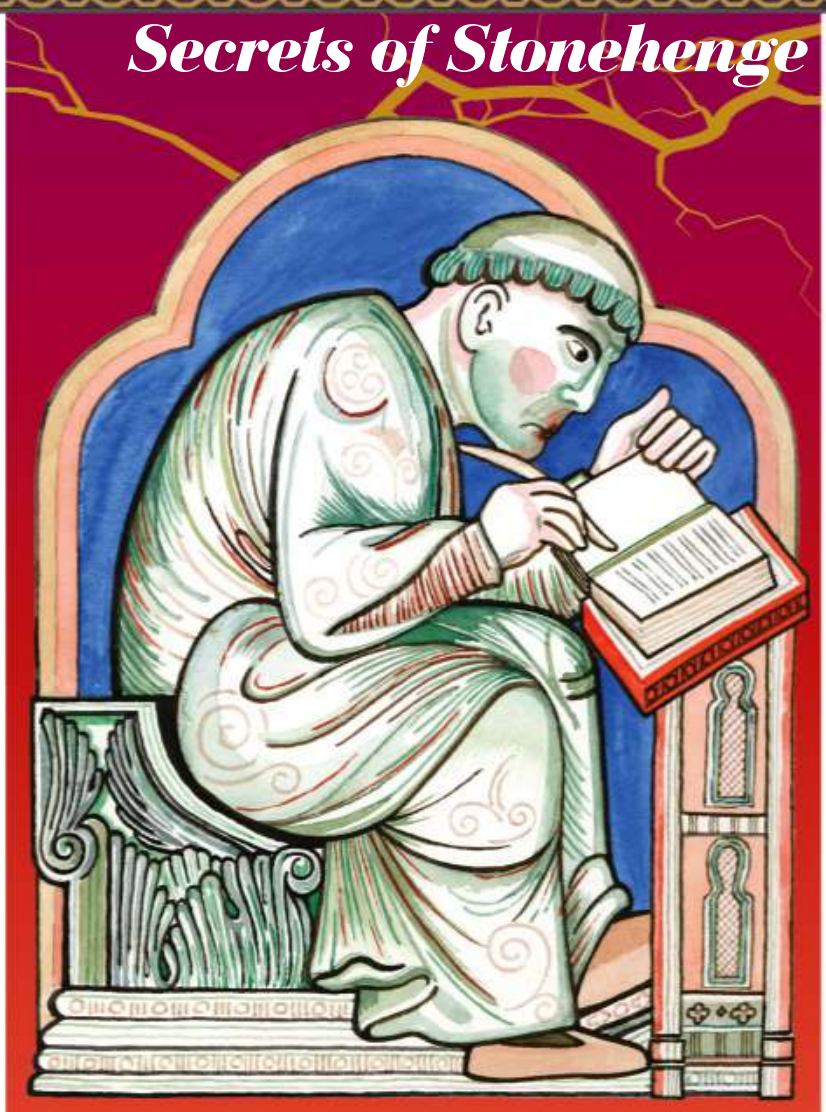
Sacred landscape

From what scientists can tell, Salisbury Plain was considered to be a sacred area long before Stonehenge itself was constructed on it. As early as 10,500 years ago, three large pine posts, which were totem poles of sorts, were erected at the site.

One famous landscape feature near Stonehenge is called Woodhenge. This site had six circles of wooden standing posts, surrounded by a bank and ditch. Built around 2500 BCE, the wooden posts have long since decayed away, and concrete markers now show the locations where the posts once stood. The site was discovered in 1925 when aerial photographs showed rings of dark spots in a wheat field. Excavations at Woodhenge revealed the remains of pottery, stone tools, animal bones and human bones, with at least two burials at the site. The exact purpose of Woodhenge, like Stonehenge, remains uncertain.

New discoveries are being made, for instance in 2014 researchers using ground-penetrating radar reported finding at least 17 shrines near Stonehenge. Earlier this year scientists identified 415 potential large pits that were bigger than 2.4 metres (7.9ft) in diameter, and about 3,000 smaller pits that were less than 2.4 metres across. Some of these pits were used for hunting while others may have had ceremonial importance. The pits were found using electromagnetic induction field survey, a method that analyses the electrical conductivity of the soil to find archaeological remains. More fieldwork needs to be done to see how many of these potential pits are actually pits.

Dozens of burial mounds have been discovered near Stonehenge indicating that hundreds, if not thousands, of



MERLIN AND STONEHENGE

Why Geoffrey of Monmouth claimed it was a war memorial created by the legendary wizard

There have been many wild ideas proposed about how Stonehenge was built and what it was built for, and one far-out idea was put forward by Geoffrey of Monmouth (1095-1155).

In his book *Historia Regum Britanniae* (*History of the Kings of Britain*) he claimed that Stonehenge was commissioned by a king named Aurelius Ambrosius, who had prevailed in a war against the Saxons. The king wanted to build a memorial to the fallen and contacted Merlin, who advised him to use the 'Giant's Dance' – a series of stones from a mountain in Ireland that giants had brought from Africa. Merlin claimed the giants used the stones to make baths and that the stones had mystical and medicinal powers.

The king sent his army to Ireland and, after defeating an Irish force, brought the stones to Britain with the help of some contraptions designed by Merlin. The king then had Stonehenge built and, after he died, was buried within the monument. Needless to say, no modern-day scholar believes this story.

LEFT An aerial view of what Stonehenge might have looked like in its early years

All images: © Getty Images

ABOVE A group is photographed having a picnic at Stonehenge, 1875

ABOVE-RIGHT Two men pose at Stonehenge in 1890

people were buried there in ancient times. In fact, cremated remains have been found within Stonehenge itself according to Matt Leivers, an archaeologist with Wessex Archaeology, an organisation that provides archaeological and heritage services. The importance that Stonehenge had helps explain why people were buried within or near the monument.

Some human remains may have been brought a long distance to be buried near Stonehenge. Leivers says: "We know from isotope evidence, for instance, that some of the people buried at Stonehenge spent parts of their lives on the European mainland."

Leivers, who has excavated some of the burials near Stonehenge, adds: "It seems beyond doubt that Stonehenge – an extraordinary temple to the rising and setting sun, an expression of peoples' oneness and enmeshment with life's cycles, the cog that turned the world – had a fame and renown that spread far beyond the confines of south-west England. If it was one of the spiritual centres of your religion why wouldn't you want to be buried there?"

Hunting

Archaeologists have also found evidence that widespread prehistoric hunting took place near the site of Stonehenge. For example, they have recently excavated a 10,000-year-old hunting pit that, according to Philippe De Smedt, an associate professor of the environment at Ghent University in Belgium, was "probably dug as a hunting trap for large game such as aurochs [a now-extinct cattle species], red deer and wild boar."

This landscape was certainly an excellent place for hunting. Sam Hudson, a postgraduate research student at the University of Southampton's school of geography and environmental science, agrees that hunters in the area "particularly targeted aurochs, though other species such as red deer, elk, wild boar and fish were eaten too." By the time Stonehenge was built, people in the area would have been consuming a large number of domesticated animals.

"I believe that by the time of the construction of Stonehenge it is likely that all populations would've been eating domestic pigs and cattle, as well as small amounts of cereal crops and possibly wild plants too," Hudson explains.

"The building crew was probably a mixed bunch, encompassing a diverse array of individuals including women and children"

Why was Stonehenge constructed?

Many theories have been put forward as to why Stonehenge was constructed. "It's crucial to remember that Stonehenge was built and used over a period of more than a millennium, and over that time its meaning and purpose will have changed a lot, as will peoples' reasons for thinking it important," says Leivers, noting that Stonehenge does face the rising sun on midsummer morning, suggesting that this was of some importance.

Another possibility is that Stonehenge may have been used as a solar calendar. In an article published in the journal *Antiquity* in 2022 Timothy Darvill, an archaeology professor at Bournemouth University, used numerology (the study of the meaning of numbers) to propose how this would work. Stonehenge had 30 large sarsen stones, linked together at the top with 30 stone lintels forming a circle, wrote Darvill, noting that if you multiplied 30 by 12 it would give you 360 days.

Inside this sarsen circle were 10 stones, forming a horseshoe shape, that were spaced apart in groups of two, resulting in five pairs of stones that may have represented five additional days – giving 365 days, Darvill wrote. Finally, there are four 'station stones,' as archaeologists call them, that are located outside the sarsen circle, which could signify the need to add a day once every four years given a solar year of 365.25 days.

Another idea is that acoustics – creating a place where sound could be amplified – played a role in the decision to build Stonehenge. A study published in 2020 in the *Journal of Archaeological Science* found that sound within the outer circle of Stonehenge was amplified by the ring of sarsens between ten percent and 20 percent compared

ABOVE-LEFT Druids celebrating midsummer in 1948, surrounded by onlookers

ABOVE Druids celebrate the Summer Solstice at Stonehenge, 21 June 1978

All images: © Getty Images

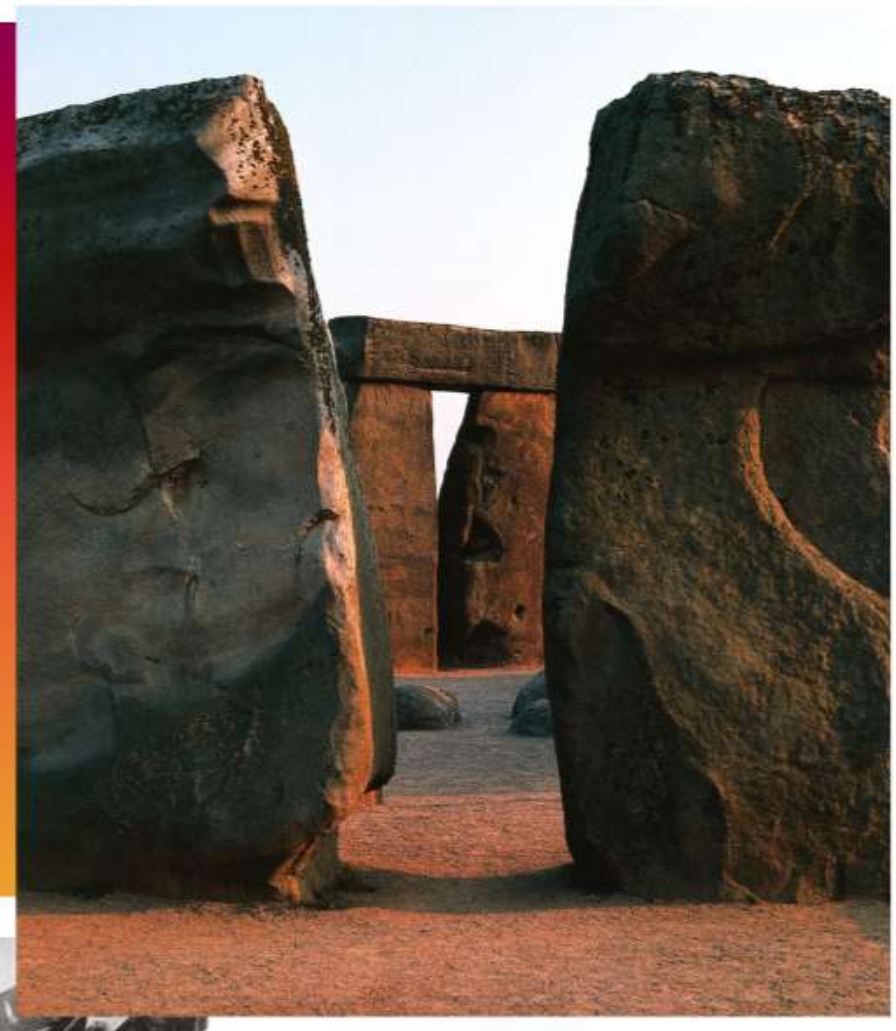
HAMMERING AWAY

The tools used to construct Stonehenge

The ancient builders of Stonehenge used other stones to hammer the sarsens and bluestones into shape. English Heritage, the charity that oversees Stonehenge, revealed that large amounts of hammered-off sarsen and bluestone material was found along with broken hammerstones in a field north of Stonehenge.

The hammerstones vary in size, with the larger hammerstones being used to break off large pieces and the smaller hammerstones being used to finish and smooth their surfaces. Some stones were more finely finished then others, with the stones in the centre of Stonehenge typically having a finer finish.

To connect the stones together, circular protrusions were carved into the top of the upright stones while holes were carved into the bottom of the lintels. Additionally, a mortise and tenon-like design was used at the end of the lintels: a protrusion was carved into the end of some lintels and they would fit into small openings carved at the end of other lintels.



ABOVE Some restoration attempts have not been very successful, leading to continued maintenance

LEFT The site has seen several conservation projects over the decades, such as this one from 1958

with sound in the open. The research also revealed that speech or music made within Stonehenge was harder to hear if you were outside the sarsen circle.

Another theory about Stonehenge, released in 2012 by members of the Stonehenge Riverside Project, is that Stonehenge marks the "unification of Britain," a time when people across the island worked together and used a similar style of houses, pottery and other items. It would explain why they were able to bring bluestones all the way from west Wales and how the labour and resources for the construction were marshalled.

"Stonehenge itself was a massive undertaking, requiring the labour of thousands to move stones from as far away as west Wales, shaping them and erecting them. Just the work itself, requiring everyone literally to pull together, would have been an act of unification," says professor Mike Parker Pearson of the University of Sheffield.

Were the Druids involved?

One question that is sometimes asked is whether the druids were involved in the building of Stonehenge or played a role in any activities that occurred there. Ancient records indicate that the druids were active in Britain and Gaul (modern day France). The earliest written record we have mentioning the druids dates back about 2,400 years, explains Barry Cunliffe, an emeritus professor of European archaeology, in his book *Druids: A Very Short Introduction*. Stonehenge was constructed between roughly 5,000 to 4,000 years ago, leaving a significant gap of time between Stonehenge and the earliest written record of the druids. Cunliffe notes in his book that druidism surely goes back earlier than 2,400 years, but just how far back is unknown.

However, from what is known about the druids, scholars tend to be sceptical of a link between the druids and Stonehenge. "Classical authors referred to ancient druids worshipping only in wooded groves – there is no mention of any link between druids and stone [monuments] let alone Stonehenge," wrote Pearson in an article published in 2013 in the journal *Archaeology International*.

Stonehenge today

Stonehenge is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and, while visitors can get close to the site, they cannot usually touch the stones or enter the circle itself. The Stonehenge Visitor Centre features artefacts dating to the time of Stonehenge and has a number of displays detailing the site's history. The number of visitors varies but it tends to attract more than one million per year.

Today 'neo-pagan' groups that embrace ancient druidic and non-Christian beliefs regard Stonehenge as a monument of some religious importance and often visit the site around the time of the solstices to mark the occasion. At times officials allow these groups, and others who wish to observe the solstice, inside the circle.

Conservation of Stonehenge is an ongoing concern. In the 1960s conservators used cement mortar to fill in cracks in the stones, a problem as cement can lead to damage to the stones from trapped moisture. In 2021 conservators removed the cement mortar and replaced it with lime mortar that does not trap moisture.

While many lichens now grow on the stones, conservators want to preserve rather than destroy them. The lichens are "an important part of the ecosystem, and a vital part of the character of the stones themselves," English Heritage said in a 2021 statement.

The expansion of nearby roads is a conservation concern. At the time of writing there is an ongoing legal battle over a plan to build a 3.2km road tunnel near Stonehenge as part of a highway expansion plan. Archaeologists and environmentalists say the tunnel may have a negative effect on Stonehenge, and the matter is currently before the courts.

"There is an ongoing legal battle over a plan to build a 3.2km tunnel near Stonehenge"

ABOVE Revellers flocked to Stonehenge for the Winter Solstice in December 2021 when the site was reopened

ABOVE-INSET Many present-day groups regard Stonehenge as a monument of religious importance

All images: © Getty Images

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF THE USS INDIANAPOLIS

The heavy cruiser met its tragic end after delivering components for the nuclear bomb nicknamed Little Boy

Written by Michael E Haskew

© Getty Images

FAR-LEFT President Franklin D Roosevelt aboard USS Indianapolis with his family as he reviewed the United States fleet in New York Harbor

LEFT The USS Indianapolis, shown here in 1939, was badly damaged in early 1945 as it supported US landings on Okinawa

After completing its mission to deliver components of the nuclear bomb Little Boy to the island of Tinian in the Marianas during World War II, the heavy cruiser USS Indianapolis was torpedoed and sunk by the Japanese submarine I-58 in the Philippine Sea shortly after midnight, 30 July 1945.

Approximately 300 men of the ship's complement of 1,195 personnel were killed when the warship plunged to the bottom just 12 minutes after being struck by two Type 95 torpedoes, while nearly 900 were cast into the sea with only life vests and a few rafts. Through a series of miscommunications, the sinking was not reported in a timely manner and the survivors drifted in the open sea for nearly four days. During the horrific period, many succumbed to saltwater poisoning, exposure to the elements, dehydration and relentless shark attacks.

After seemingly endless hours of agony, only 316 sailors were finally rescued, and the series of tragic events resulted in the greatest loss of life involving a single ship in the history of the US Navy.

SERVICE WITH DISTINCTION

The last days of the Indianapolis and the cruiser's tragic demise have been the subject of controversy and examination for decades. However, prior to its unfortunate end the 10,110-ton Portland-class heavy cruiser, second of three launched in its class, compiled an illustrious service record, earning 10 battle stars during World War II and serving periodically as the flagship of the US Fifth Fleet, commanded by Vice Admiral Raymond A Spruance.

The Indianapolis was laid down by the New York Shipbuilding Corporation on 31 March 1930, launched on 7 November 1931, commissioned on 15 November 1932 and named for the capital city of the state of Indiana. The state-of-the-art warship was sleek and impressive, capable of a top speed of 32.7 knots and armed with nine eight-inch main guns, eight secondary five-inch cannon and an array of other weapons. In July 1933, the Indianapolis welcomed President Franklin D Roosevelt aboard, transporting the American leader and six members of his cabinet from Campobello Island, New Brunswick to Annapolis, Maryland.

"GO GET US SOME LIFE JACKETS. THIS THING'S JUMPING MIGHTY BAD, AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN"

Seaman First Class Felton Outland

The Indianapolis was outfitted to serve as a flagship and assumed that role with the US Navy Scouting Force 1 off the California coast during the autumn of 1933. President Roosevelt boarded once again in 1934 for a naval review, and for a third time in November 1936 during a goodwill tour of South America.

WORLD WAR II SERVICE

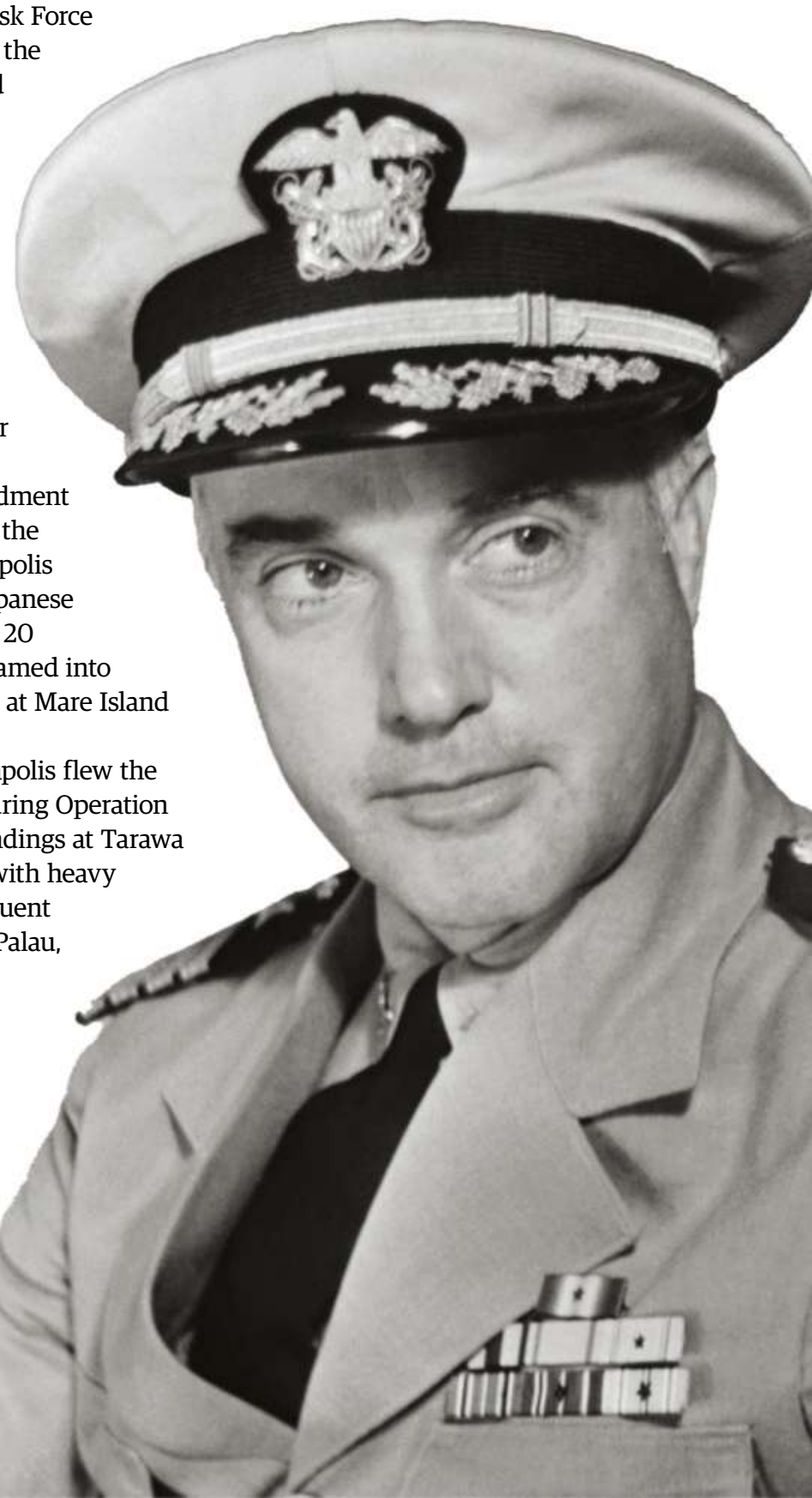
When Japanese aircraft attacked the US naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on 7 December 1941, the Indianapolis was off Johnston Atoll leading Task Force 3 in a bombardment exercise. The heavy cruiser joined Task Force 12 in the fruitless search for the enemy carrier force that had launched the destructive raid, and returned to Pearl Harbor on 13 December.

In the spring of 1942, the Indianapolis served as an escort for the aircraft carrier USS Lexington during operations in the waters off New Guinea, and that summer the cruiser headed to Aleutian waters, participating in the bombardment of Japanese installations on the island of Kiska. The Indianapolis intercepted and sank the Japanese transport Akagane Maru on 20 February 1943, and later steamed into San Francisco Bay for a refit at Mare Island Naval Shipyard.

That autumn, the Indianapolis flew the flag of Admiral Spruance during Operation Galvanic, supporting the landings at Tarawa Atoll in the Gilbert Islands with heavy gunfire. Throughout subsequent operations in the Marshall, Palau, and Caroline Islands, the Indianapolis continued as Fifth Fleet flagship. During action off the Carolines, her anti-aircraft gunners shot down a Japanese torpedo bomber.

In the spring of 1944, the Indianapolis supported

BELOW Captain McVay was court-martialed after the sinking



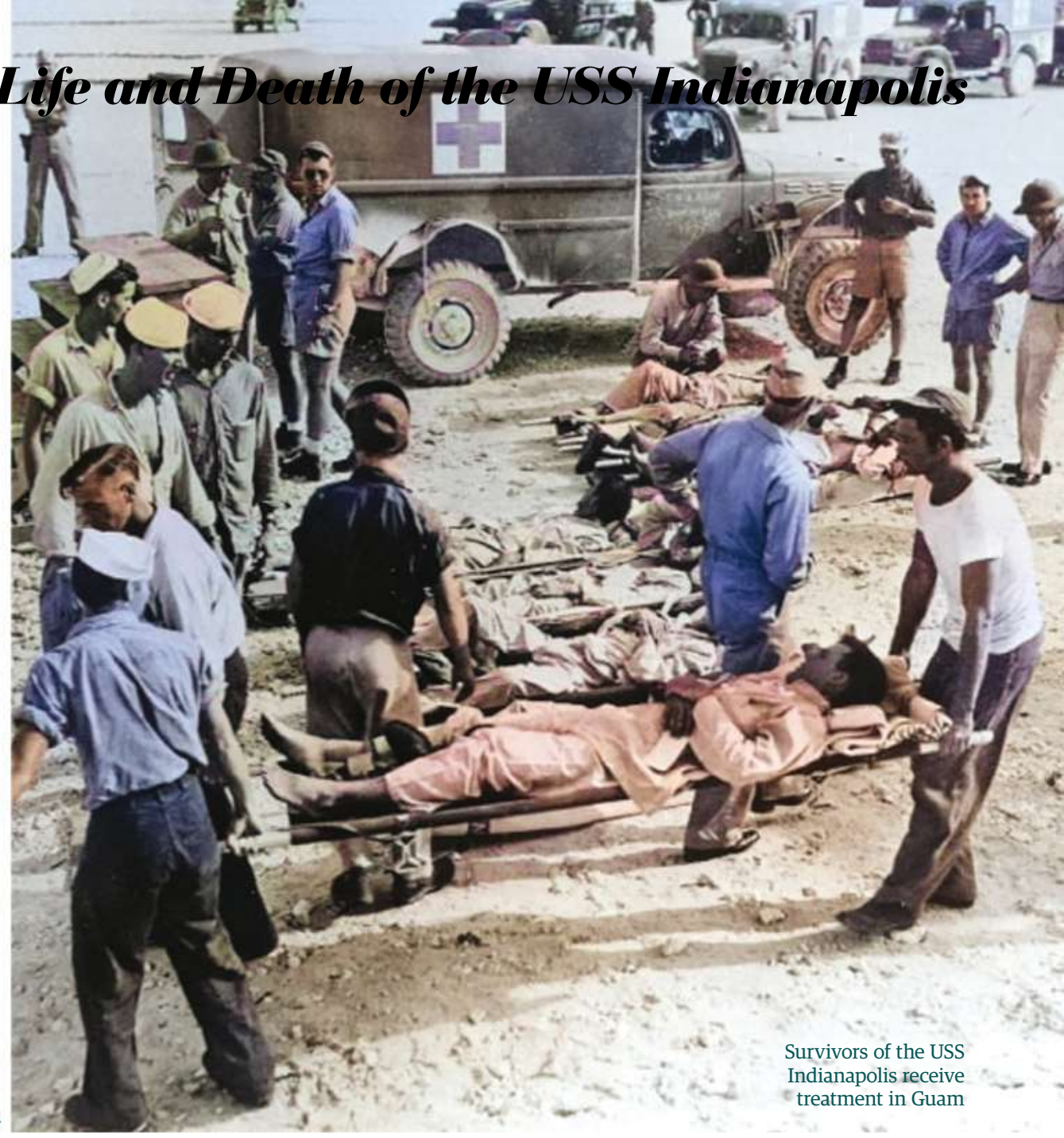
US Marine landings in the Marianas archipelago, bombarding the island of Saipan. During the Battle of the Philippine Sea in June, the cruiser's anti-aircraft guns shot down another Japanese plane, and subsequently the Indianapolis returned to Mare Island for another wartime refit.

In early 1945, the Indianapolis was assigned to the navy's fast carrier task force under Admiral Marc Mitscher and participated as an escort during numerous air raids against the Japanese home islands and the capital of Tokyo. This action was followed by fire support during the US landings on Iwo Jima in the Volcano Islands. While supporting further operations at Okinawa in the Ryukyu Islands, the Indianapolis was struck by a Japanese bomb and the enemy pilot crashed his plane into the port side of the after main deck, inflicting significant damage. The Indianapolis then steamed back to Mare Island for extensive repairs.

PACIFIC DESTINY

As the repairs were concluding, Captain Charles Butler McVay, commanding officer of the Indianapolis, received orders to conduct a top-secret mission. Details of the cargo to be transported to the island of Tinian in the Marianas were withheld from the crew, and speculation was rampant as to the purpose of their sortie.

The Indianapolis weighed anchor from Hunters Point Naval Shipyard in San Francisco Bay on 16 July 1945, with components of the Little Boy atomic bomb aboard. The heavy cruiser completed the first leg of its voyage in just over three days, arriving at Pearl Harbor on the 19th. From there, the swift



Survivors of the USS Indianapolis receive treatment in Guam

THE ENEMY'S TESTIMONY

Lieutenant Commander Mochitsura Hashimoto, captain of the submarine I-58, helped to exonerate Captain McVay

The commander of an enemy naval vessel being called to testify in the court martial of a US Navy officer was an unprecedented turn of events. Nevertheless, in November 1945 Lieutenant Commander Mochitsura Hashimoto was flown to Washington, DC, and took the stand during the military trial of Captain McVay, commander of the USS Indianapolis.

During questioning, Hashimoto, who ordered the firing of the torpedoes that sank the ship, stated that even if the Indianapolis had followed a defensive zigzag course it would have made no difference to the success of his submarine's attack. Despite Hashimoto's testimony, McVay was convicted of placing his ship at undue risk.

Decades later, Hashimoto intervened once again. Senator John Warner, chairman of the Senate Committee On Armed Services, was preparing to ask the Senate to vote on a resolution clearing McVay's name. Hashimoto wrote him a letter that convinced Warner to move forward.

The 90-year-old Hashimoto wrote that he joined the "brave men who survived the sinking of the Indianapolis... in urging that your national legislature clear their captain's name... Our peoples have forgiven each other for that terrible war and its consequences. Perhaps it is time your people forgave Captain McVay for the humiliation of his unjust conviction."

On 12 October 2000, the Senate voted to exonerate McVay. Thirteen days later, Hashimoto died.

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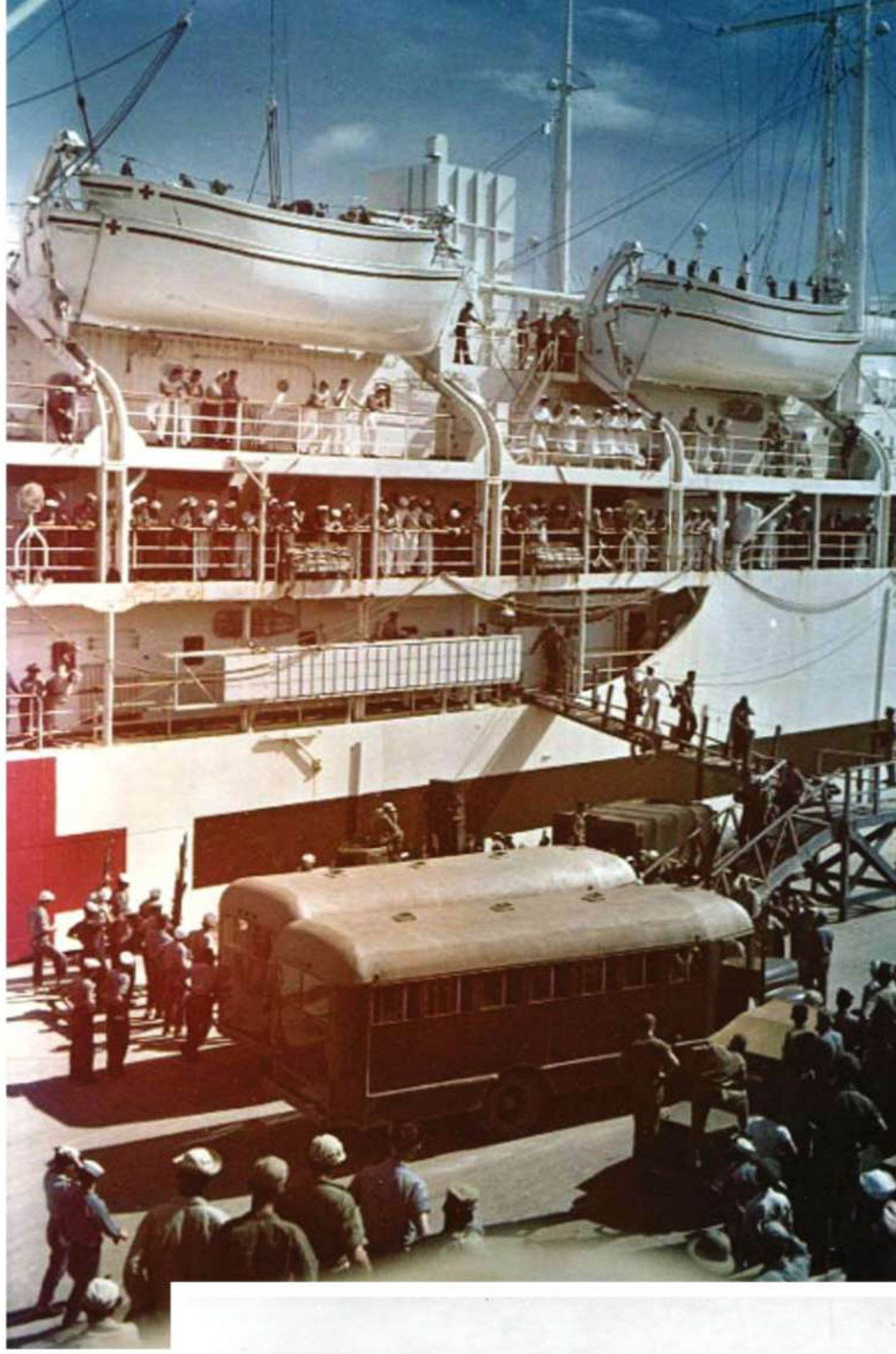

Indianapolis reached Tinian on the 26 July. The delivery of the vital cargo had been accomplished in just 10 days.

Two days later, the Indianapolis made port at the island of Guam, and numerous crewmen were transferred from the vessel while replacements came aboard. Captain McVay got underway once again on 26 July, en route to join Task Force 95 in Philippine waters.

Just after midnight on 30 July, as the Indianapolis had completed roughly half the voyage to the vicinity of the island of Leyte in the Philippines, the heavy cruiser fell victim to torpedoes fired from Japanese submarine I-58. Lieutenant Commander Mochitsura Hashimoto, the submarine's commander, had stalked the Indianapolis for some time, believing he had an American battleship in his sights.

According to *The Washington Post* newspaper, a sonar operator aboard I-58 had picked up the faint sound of dishes rattling in the galley aboard the Indianapolis from a range of about 10km. As the distance between the vessels steadily closed, Hashimoto's breath quickened. At 12:04am, he ordered a spread of six torpedoes fired from less than 1,400 metres – point-blank range.

The deadly missiles hissed toward their target, and moments later the first torpedo slammed into the heavy cruiser's starboard bow. In seconds, a second torpedo rocked the Indianapolis amidships. Dozens of sailors were killed instantly. Others were tossed from their bunks by the tremendous explosion.

Seaman First Class Felton Outland remembered: "I asked my friend George Abbott, after the ship got hit, I says: 'Go get us some life jackets. This thing's jumping mighty bad, and I don't know what's going to happen.' George went, and he come back in a few minutes and had one life jacket, so he gave me that one. He hung around a minute or two and he said: 'I think I'll go get another one.' I said: 'I think you better.' He did, but I didn't ever see him again."

As the Indianapolis settled by the bow, hundreds of sailors, Captain McVay among them, were thrown or jumped into the sea. Many of them were covered with oil from the cruiser's ruptured fuel tanks. The Indianapolis rolled over and then its stern lifted high into the air, propellers still turning. The last plunge occurred with remarkable swiftness, and the survivors were left in darkness with little in the way of provisions or lifeboats. Their ordeal was just beginning.

ABOVE-LEFT
The heavy cruiser served as flagship of the Fifth Fleet during WWII

ABOVE Survivors are brought ashore from the hospital ship USS Tranquillity at Guam, 8 August 1945

RIGHT
The Japanese submarine I-58, which sank the USS Indianapolis, awaits being decommissioned in 1946

REDISCOVERING THE INDIANAPOLIS

Years of searching for the lost heavy cruiser had come to nothing, until a breakthrough in 2016

After numerous failed attempts to locate the wreckage of the USS Indianapolis, sunk on 30 July 1945 in the Philippine Sea by the Japanese submarine I-58, new clues as to the location of the ship surfaced in 2016.

Naval historian Dr Richard Hulver conducted research that led him to believe that the actual resting place of the Indianapolis was further west than had been previously thought. Hulver's investigations revealed that the LST 779, a US Navy transport ship, had passed the Indianapolis on 29 July, approximately 11 hours before the cruiser was torpedoed. This new information narrowed the search area to 1,550 square kilometres of ocean (still a huge challenge) and indicated that the wreck might be around 40km away from the previously concentrated search area.

On 19 August 2017 the research vessel Petrel, flagship of entrepreneur Paul Allen's USS Indianapolis Project, deployed a remotely operated underwater vehicle that scoured the sea floor of the new search area. It found the resting place of the doomed warship amid the peaks and valleys of a submerged mountain range. The vessel's detached bow lay some distance away from the main wreckage, along with a lengthy debris field and the cruiser's two forward eight-inch gun turrets, which had been torn from their mounts during the descent into the 5,500-metre abyss.

INCREDIBLE SUFFERING

Approximately two-thirds of the nearly 900 men who went into the water perished during the harrowing hours that followed. Some died of wounds and others fell victim to ferocious shark attacks, which intensified after the bodies of the dead had been ravaged. Still more men died of dehydration, saltwater poisoning or simply lost their minds – letting go of flotation devices and drifting into the darkness.

On 2 August, more than three days after the sinking, a Lockheed Ventura patrol plane spotted those crewmen left alive and a rescue effort was finally mounted. Lieutenant Commander Robert Marks, piloting a Consolidated PBY Catalina flying boat, responded to a radio transmission from the Ventura, landed in heavy seas, and took 56 men aboard but was unable to get airborne. Within hours, several US Navy surface ships arrived on the scene and brought the survivors aboard. Two of those rescued died a few weeks later.

WHAT WENT WRONG?

During its 1,770km voyage from Guam, the Indianapolis was sailing alone – without escort – at the time of the I-58 attack. The rapid sinking allowed little time to send a distress signal, and confusion as to proper procedures for reporting late arrivals or non-arrivals of ships compounded the disaster. Although reports of Japanese submarine activity were received, plotters at headquarters on Guam merely tracked the anticipated course and speed of the warship. At Leyte, the expected arrival time of the Indianapolis passed but no decisive action was taken. Several personnel were later officially reprimanded for inaction, while others had simply shown little concern for the situation.

Among those who ignored the potential plight of the Indianapolis survivors was Lieutenant Stuart B Gibson, operations officer, port director at Tacloban in the Philippines. On 13 August 1945, a US Navy court of inquiry found that Gibson "considered he was not required to take any action regarding non-arrivals of

> "...UNTIL AFTER THE SINKING OF INDIANAPOLIS, WHEN A NEW DIRECTIVE WAS ISSUED, THE PORT DIRECTOR, TACLOBAN, DID NOT ASSUME ANY RESPONSIBILITY..."
>
> US Navy Court of Inquiry

combatant ships, therefore, he took none when the non-arrival of Indianapolis came to his attention... That until after the sinking of Indianapolis, when a new directive was issued, the port director, Tacloban, did not assume any responsibility regarding the arrival or non-arrival of combatant ships in that port."

Humiliated by the sinking and botched response, the US Navy sought a scapegoat for the tragic affair and Captain McVay was court-martialed. He was charged with failing to order his crew to abandon ship and placing the Indianapolis at undue risk, or 'hazarding' the ship, due to failure to sail in a zigzag pattern to potentially disrupt a submarine attack. McVay was convicted of the second charge, although Hashimoto was called to testify and stated that the zigzag tactic would not have saved the cruiser from the torpedo attack. Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz, commander-in-chief Pacific Fleet and later chief of naval operations, set aside the conviction and allowed the promotion of McVay to rear admiral upon his retirement in 1949.

McVay was the only US Navy officer to be court-martialed following the loss of a ship under his command during World War II. While many of the survivors of the Indianapolis tragedy held their commanding officer in high esteem, refusing to blame McVay for the sinking, others were less forgiving. For years after his retirement, the commander received letters from the families of deceased Indianapolis sailors blaming him for the deaths of their loved ones.

At the age of 70, the retired McVay could no longer live with the anguish caused by the incident. On 6 November 1968, he dressed in the standard-issue US Navy uniform, loaded a .38-calibre revolver, walked out the door of his home in Litchfield, Connecticut, and sat down on a stone step. Moments later he shot himself in the temple. When McVay's body was discovered by the gardener, his hand was clutching a toy sailor, possibly given to him as a child.

EXONERATION AT LONG LAST

The final chapter of the Indianapolis saga has yet to be written. As of early 2022, two survivors of the tragedy were still living. Yet some measure of closure was achieved in 1996, nearly three decades after McVay's suicide.

Hunter Scott, a sixth grade middle school student, chose the story of the Indianapolis as a history project, and his work became a catalyst for the reexamination of McVay's service record. Michael Monroney, a Congressional lobbyist and son of a former senator from the state of Oklahoma, was instrumental in an effort to clear McVay's name. Navy Captain William Toti, commander of the nuclear attack submarine USS Indianapolis, and Senator Bob Smith of New Hampshire, brought the issue before the US Senate Committee On Armed Services in 1999; in October 2000 the United States Congress passed a resolution exonerating McVay of negligence or wrongdoing in the loss of the heavy cruiser.

The USS Indianapolis lies more than 5,400 metres beneath the surface of the Philippine Sea. The wreckage was discovered in 2017 during search operations led by entrepreneur and former Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen.

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

THE HISTORY OF WITCHES

Something wicked this way comes: from Ancient Greece to 16th century witchfinders, we explore the world of magic

Written by Callum McKelvie

EXPERT BIO

MALCOLM GASKILL

Malcolm Gaskill is emeritus professor of Early Modern History at the University of East Anglia. He has written extensively on witchcraft beliefs, most recently in the Wolfston History Prize nominated book *The Ruin of All Witches*.

Headshot courtesy of the Wolfon Foundation

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The belief in witchcraft and magic seems to have always cast a spell on the popular imagination. The image of the green-faced, pointy-hatted witch who cackles maniacally as she rides a broomstick across a starry night sky has adorned Halloween cards and the pages of fairy tale books for decades. Yet witchcraft itself has a long and convoluted history, the word often changing in meaning and certainly in the seriousness with which it is treated. From the 16th to the 18th century, hoards of women were placed on trial, tortured and murdered under the charge of 'witchcraft'. In the 20th and 21st centuries it has become a subject for fantasy and fiction, with tales of bespectacled boy wizards and teenage witches with talking cats. But where does belief in witchcraft come from and how has it changed over the centuries?

"It's an incredibly ancient belief, actually," says Malcolm Gaskill, author of *The Ruin of All Witches,* nominated for the 2022 Wolfson History Prize. "In the classical world, they believe in witches (though they don't always call them that) but there is the essential idea that there are demons out there in the universe and that they can be manipulated for good or for evil." For example, in Greek mythology Hecate was the goddess of magic and spells and had animals associated with her, perhaps explaining the origin of the witch's familiar, including a black dog and a polecat. This belief was not confined to simple mythology either: at Teos during the 5th century BCE a man and his family were even sentenced to death and killed for supposedly practising harmful magic. Witches also featured in the Bible, with King Saul seeking the Witch of Endor in order to summon the ghost of the prophet Samuel. The famous phrase of *Exodus 22:18* –"Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" – would be used in later centuries to justify the persecution of people suspected of witchcraft. The phrase was even included on the front page of the notorious Witchfinder General Matthew Hopkins' 1647 work *The Discovery of Witches*.

During the Middle Ages, witchcraft began to become intrinsically linked with both the Devil but also with heresy. In 1374 Pope Gregory XI stated that all magic was done with the help of demons. A little later, witches began to be seen as having direct communication with Satan, having made a diabolical pact with him. Another crucial part of witch mythology that develops during this period is that they are now believed to attend sabbaths: covert meetings with other witches where they would commit their evil acts. "It fuses with a fear of heresy, of conspiracy against the prevailing Christian church," Gaskill explains. "It becomes a kind of dark fantasy with all these phantasmagorical images associated with it." Towards the end of the Middle Ages, in the 15th century and perhaps slightly earlier, witchcraft was no longer just a subject for religious discussion but also a way to explain the hardships of the world. "This is particularly true in the late medieval into the early modern period, the era of what was called the Little Ice Age," Gaskill continues. "Because of the cold it's climatically disastrous for people that depend on the harvest. Between the 1420s and the 1430s in places like Alpine Italy and Switzerland you get famines resulting from disastrous harvests and that connects with the idea that maybe these people are under demonic attack."

ABOVE A study of Luis Ricardo Falero's *Witches going to their Sabbath*

BELOW *The Magic Circle* (1886) by John William Waterhouse

One of the key works in the developing concept of witchcraft was the *Malleus Maleficarum*. Roughly translated as *The Hammer of Witches* this book was written around 1486 by a pair of German Dominicans – Heinrich Kramer and Jacob Sprenger – and was at its core a manual for the persecution and hunting of witches. "It's probably the most famous book in the history of witchcraft but it's an extremely contentious work," Gaskill explains. "It's very muddled, I think rather disreputable and has much less influence than sometimes people suppose." The key author of the two, Kramer, was an inquisitor for southern Germany and became involved in witch trials in 1476. Nine years later, Kramer investigated one Helena Scheuberin and 13 other suspected witches in Innsbruck, Austria, in what would prove to be a turning point in his witchcraft obsession. Described by author Dr Elinor Cleghorn as "a woman with a smart mouth and loose morals," Scheuberin found her sexuality being cross-examined by Kramer during a trial to the extent that her lawyer, hired by the local bishop, was able to have Scheuberin acquitted and the trial thrown out.

Is it simply a coincidence that when Kramer returned home, humiliated, he chose to pen a work that declared all witches should be classed as heretics and burnt at the stake? "It takes a particularly misogynistic line on witchcraft," says Gaskill. "The understanding, and it's particularly extreme in the *Malleus Maleficarum*, is that women are the

ABOVE Statue of the goddess Hecate, who presided over witchcraft and magic

"TITUBA CONFESSED, STATING: 'THE DEVIL CAME TO ME AND BID ME SERVE HIM.' HER TESTIMONY WAS ENOUGH TO SPARK HYSTERIA IN THE SMALL TOWN OF SALEM"

weaker vessel. That's what the Bible teaches. Without pious faith and devotion to Christ, they will become vulnerable to the Devil's temptation more so than men." Yet Kramer's work, for all its vile implications, Gaskill argues, was largely without influence during its own time, particularly in Britain, where it was not translated into English until 1929. "It's actually a century later, during the late 16th and early 17th centuries, when it starts to become read more and is translated into French and German," Gaskill explains.

In the British Isles during the late 16th and early 17th centuries it was actually King James VI of Scotland (also King James I of England from 1603) who helped stir up national witchcraft panics. He was particularly interested in witchcraft and wrote *Daemonologie* (1597), a book that outlined how witchcraft was the result of a pact between humans and demons. The king's obsession with witchcraft appears to have begun in 1590 when on return from Scandinavia to Scotland his ship was caught in a severe storm. When it was suggested that the storms may have been the work of witches using the dark arts, a group of women known as the North Berwick witches were accused. They numbered anywhere between 70 and 200 women and, under torture, some confessed. One, Agnes Sampson, claimed to have attached parts of a corpse to a cat, sailed out in a sieve and then placed the cat in the ocean, causing the catastrophic storm. Although James was initially sceptical of the accusations, his opinion changed when Sampson recounted a conversation the king had with his new bride on their wedding night – or at least convinced him that she knew enough of it. The result of James' interest would be *Daemonologie*, one of the intentions of which was to convince sceptics of the real 'dangers' witchcraft posed. It was instrumental in the Witchcraft Act of 1604, which built on

ANATOMY OF A WITCH

Where does the traditional image of the green-faced, pointy-hatted witch come from?

POINTED HAT

Pointed hats have a long and rich history, with some large bronze hats thought to have been worn by druidic priests during the Bronze Age. Ancient mummies discovered in China were adorned with large felt hats, suspected to be related to falconry. However, it is possible that the witches' pointed hat could have an antisemitic origin, with the 1215 Fourth Council of the Lateran requiring all Jews to wear the Judenhat, which was then linked to witchcraft.

GREEN FACE

One of the key pieces of media in the development of the popular image of the witch is the 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz*. Prior to this the notion of depicting witches with green skin does not seem that common, with even the witch in the original novel not being described as having unusual skin tones. Some theories purport that witches appeared green due to the extreme torture they underwent during trials, though it is unclear how much evidence supports this.

FAMILIAR

Witches are often depicted with familiars, or creatures that do their bidding. Often these are animals such as black cats, but in reality they were suspected to be small imps or demons. During some witchcraft trials, a 'teat' would be looked for on the body of the accused from which she fed the familiar. However, rarely are these creatures depicted as flying monkeys in bell boy costumes.

BROOMSTICK

The idea of the witch 'flying' on a broomstick was particularly common during early modern witch trials in Europe. This was often described as the means by which the suspected witch would travel to the sabbath. The suspected origins of this are numerous, with one unusual theory stating that hallucinogenic balms, or 'witches brews', were applied to the genital area using broom handles and that this might be an early source of the idea.

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earlier laws and defined witchcraft as well as providing specific punishments for it.

It was in the 17th century that the English witch hunts reached their peak. During the English Civil War (1642-51) the most notorious of the witch hunters was Matthew Hopkins, a figure who has become infamous due to his horrendous crimes and because of his moniker, the Witchfinder General. "He has come down to us as a kind of bogeyman, as a villain, from the famous 1968 horror film starring Vincent Price," Gaskill explains. "He's a sort of poster boy for witch persecution. His face fits that image of the intolerant

"WITCHES WERE PORTRAYED AS VILLAINS, HEXING THE INNOCENT, BUT IT WAS THEY THEMSELVES WHO WERE THE VICTIMS"

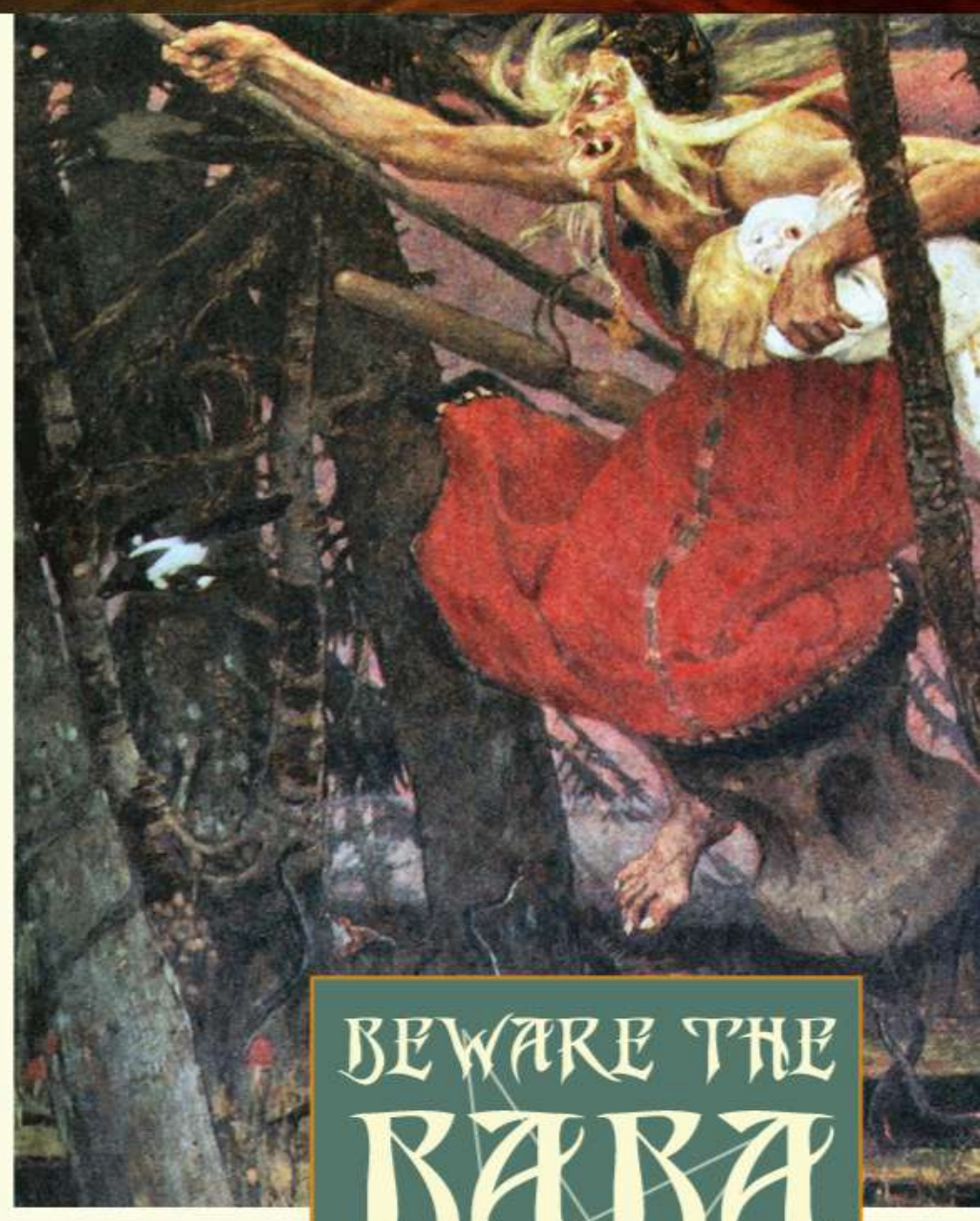
persecutor of innocent people. However, if you start peeling away the layers of folklore and memory we don't really know what he was like and we don't know for sure what his motivations were." Between 1644 and 1646 Hopkins is believed to have been responsible for the deaths of roughly 300 women. His career began in 1644 when he tried and convicted a total of 23 women after John Stearne, an associate of Hopkins, accused them of attempted murder through sorcery. At the end of the trial 19 were hanged and four imprisoned for life. It was sometime after this event that Hopkins took the title of Witchfinder General and began travelling around

LEFT Illustration of Matthew Hopkins, the self-styled Witchfinder General

East Anglia, trying suspected witches – for a fee, of course.

Even at the time people questioned Hopkins' motives. Was this not just some horrific money-making scheme? Were innocent lives deemed forfeit so that he and Stearne could make some quick cash? Hopkins' himself responded to this with a blatant lie suggesting that he never took more than 20 shillings, barely enough to cover the expenses of the trip. As Gaskill states in his book *Witchfinders: A Seventeenth Century English Tragedy:* "It is easy to imagine the outrage this self-pitying statement would have caused at Aldeburgh or King's Lynn where his swingeing costs had run into pounds rather than mere shillings." The evidence suggests that Hopkins' motivations were purely financial, though this may not have been entirely true. "We don't know for sure what his motivations were," Gaskill explains. "He's a minor Puritan gentleman, somebody who believes in the greater purification of England and his Church. He believes in the perpetuation of what he would have seen as Catholic elements in society that needed to be purged. Due to his charging a fee he has been accused of exploiting the situation for his own gain. But one can see him not only as sincere but also rather typical of zealous Puritan men of his time, including Oliver Cromwell, who believed that they were doing God's work."

Another name that has become synonymous with witch hunts is that of Salem, Massachusetts. To this day the town remains notorious for the witch trials that occurred there in 1692, just as those on the European continent were beginning to slowly lose their ferocity and decline in their frequency. The nightmare began in January of that year when 11-year-old Abigail Williams and nine-year-old Betty Parris, niece and daughter respectively of Salem's resident reverend Samuel Parris, began having violent fits. The bizarre nature of the fits, coupled with the fact that during these episodes the girls would make bizarre noises and contort into strange shapes, led a local doctor to one conclusion: witchcraft. By the end of February the girls were pressured by magistrates to reveal the identity of those that had 'afflicted' them. During these confessions they named the supposed



ABOVE Baba Yaga is not always portrayed as evil in fairy tales

BEWARE THE BABA YAGA

This fearsome witch from Russian folklore has been giving children nightmares for centuries

Truly one of the more unique depictions of a witch, the Baba Yaga is a popular figure from Russian folklore and fairy tales. Traditionally the Baba Yaga lives in the forest in a hut that stands on chicken legs, and she travels around in a large mortar, pushing herself along with a broom or flying through the air. She is depicted as hideous and terrifying, with a huge nose and large drooping breasts, and is said to cook and eat children. However, the Baba Yaga is relatively complex for a fairy tale figure and is not always the villain of the story. Sometimes she appears as a maternal benefactor of the hero or heroine, a slightly sinister version of the fairy godmother. In a number of stories there is not just one Baba Yaga but three, all sisters and each serving a different role in the story.

witches as Tituba, a Caribbean slave of the Parris family; a beggar known as Sarah Good; and a poor elderly woman Sarah Osbourne. While the latter two denied the charges, Tituba confessed, stating: "The Devil came to me and bid me serve him." Her testimony was enough to spark hysteria in the small town.

The chaos that ensued was devastating. To quote Stacy Schiff in her book *The Witches: Salem, 1692, A History*: "The youngest of the witches was five, the eldest nearly 80. A daughter accused her mother, who in turn accused her mother, who accused a neighbour and a minister. A wife and daughter denounced their husband and father. Husbands implicated their wives, nephews their aunts, sons-in-law their mothers-in-law and siblings each other." In total 14 women, five men and two dogs were executed for witchcraft out of the 200 or so who'd been accused.

Despite being one of the most infamous witch trials, Salem is not a typical example of one. "It's important to think about Salem as being a rather unusual event," says Gaskill. "For example, there is the admission of so-called spectral evidence and so many of the accused, often young girls, say that they've seen the ghost or the ghostly image of their witchy tormentors and this is admissible in a way that really would have been seen as extremely old fashioned in England at this time."

TOP Illustration showing Tituba demonstrating magic to the children of Salem

ABOVE Shakespeare's three weird sisters from *Macbeth* are some of the most famous witches in literature

BELOW Margaret Murray, the main proponent of the witch-cult theory

During the early 18th century, witch trials began to decline. In 1735, the Witchcraft Act repealed all the earlier Acts in England and Scotland. However it would take some time for these laws to be repealed in Ireland and this would not occur until 1821. The Enlightenment saw a shift towards rational thought and many key figures, such as Isaac Newton, had an interest in subjects such as alchemy and the occult. Although it was still possible to be punished for witchcraft, this was now through imprisonment rather than execution. The last person to be executed for witchcraft was Janet Horne in 1727. During the 19th century, the occult became popularised and there was a renewed interest in spirituality.

However, during the next century witchcraft scholarship was about to have a rather unusual contribution. Margaret Murray was an Egyptologist at University College, London, between 1894 to 1935 but is most remembered for her 1921 book, *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*. This and other works by Murray laid out her theory that women persecuted for witchcraft were in fact practitioners of a widespread pre-Christian religion that had survived into early modern Europe. Murray was also invited to write the entry on witchcraft for the 1929 edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, using the opportunity to expound her own theories. This text was used up until 1969 and ensured that Murray's ideas were popularised. Gordon Napier, the author of *Maleficium: Witchcraft and Witch Hunting in the West*, says: "There may be some truth in the idea that the Devil supposedly venerated by witches was a demonised version of figures from mythology and folklore such as Pan and Puck, but it would not necessarily follow from this that there was a real and extensive witch cult."

This article has barely managed to peek into the mystical and magical world of the history of witchcraft. For example there were the famous Pendle witch trials of 1612, some of the most famous in British history, and the Loudon possessions of 1634. Not to mention the rich history that witchcraft has globally, not just in Europe and the Americas.

Although witches were often portrayed as villains, hexing innocent individuals with their evil spells, it was accused 'witches' who were themselves the victims. Targeted by witchfinders with dubious motives or enveloped by hysteria, it's an important aspect to consider next time you watch *The Wizard of Oz* or give sweets to a 'witch' on Halloween.

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"WE BUILD A FUTURE ON THE BASIS OF HOW WE SEE OUR PAST"

Interview by
Emily Staniforth

Janina Ramirez discusses her love for medieval history and the importance of making the past a place for everyone

Here at All About History, our mission is to make history accessible to everyone. Someone who shares this view is historian and broadcaster Janina Ramirez, who aims to make the past accessible for everyone through her work. We sat down to chat with Ramirez about her career, the challenges of being a historian in modern society and the importance of trying to access the people who have been forgotten by history.

ABOVE-LEFT
The Bodleian Library in Oxford

ABOVE
Hildegard of Bingen was a 12th century German intellectual

What made you decide to become a historian?

I didn't decide to become a historian, really. I accidentally fell in love with research. I wanted to be a children's author when I was 12 years old and so I loved English but I'd always been passionate about history. I had an uncle who had studied history and I wanted to follow in his footsteps. We're Polish-Irish immigrants, and he'd managed to escape the war, come to England and through his own grit and determination got a place at Oxford to read history. He was a bit of an inspiration for me but I kept parking it. I kept thinking writing is what I wanted to do. Then I went to university to study English Literature but what I realised is that I'm an absolute nerd and a bibliophile and all I want to do all day is sit in the library, and I had the Bodleian Library on my doorstep. I used to go and read books all day long and I realised that I was being drawn more and more into historical books.

Then I took a module in archaeology and went off to do Medieval Studies and suddenly I'm on a DPhil [another term for PhD]. I just could not stop researching. I loved it and I loved the sense of being a detective, digging into small nuggets and stories from the past. What I actually realised is that I wanted to be a storyteller, but being a historian in many ways is being a storyteller. You're revealing the stories of the past and you're digging into the evidence, and sometimes the stories from history are more exciting and elaborate than anything you could ever make up yourself.

Where did your passion for medieval history begin?

It was never meant to be medieval history at all. I got a place at Oxford to read literature and I received this reading list a month before I was due to start, and it said to translate four poems from Old English into modern English.

With just a few weeks to go, I suddenly opened a book of Old English. It was a completely different language and I'm not very good at languages. It scared me so much because it looked more like German or Scandinavian. It didn't even have letters that I recognised. So I literally didn't sleep for two weeks translating these four poems word for word. I turned up on my first day and every other student had gone out and bought a copy of the translations and just written it out! I had spent all this time learning it, but in the process of being so minute with these poems, I absolutely fell in love with them.

I fell in love with the sound of Old English, with the atmosphere, the attitude, the world that's behind those poems. And then I had an option to focus more on medieval literature and I ended up doing this bizarre version of an English degree, which was mostly medieval literature. Then I got an option to do archaeology and learned about the Sutton Hoo [Anglo-Saxon] treasures and bed burials and jewels and runic inscriptions and all this stuff. I just thought this was a magical world. When you read Old English poetry, it's us. It's the same human beings that we still are in the 21st century but they have something nuanced and different and special and mystical about them that I wanted to tap into.

How has the landscape of history changed since you started your career as a historian and broadcaster?

The landscape has transformed. I started making television 13 years ago and when I started out the only people making history on television, it looked to me, were men in suits who would walk up to the camera, tell you a very interesting fact about the Tudors and then walk off. It was so empirical. It was driven by the sense that they knew what they were telling me and I just had to accept it as fact because that's the way history was. It's a fact-based subject with dates and events and humans that we should know about from the past. So when I started out I did the same, and in the 13 years I've been making television, it turned out that is not the case. What I realised is authenticity

THE CHALLENGES OF STUDYING HISTORY

Ramirez reveals what it's like to be a historian today and the difficulties that come with the job

I think this is a wonderful time to be doing history, but it's also a scary time. We're living through incredibly historic times and change is so rapid. The tide is turning on issues in a second on social media. We are having to put our head above the parapets day after day to stand up for the issues we think matter. Journalists have to be impartial: they can't say these things with as much passion but as historians it's our duty. We work with ideologies and if we are not responding to ideological changes as they're happening and then retrospectively applying those to our subject, then we're not doing our job. But it does mean we become targets.

I will not stop talking about issues that matter because they really do matter. In the field that I work in, which is inclusive feminism, I believe so strongly that we have to keep talking about issues of equality, diversity and inclusion because we build a future on the basis of how we see our past. I want to look at the past in ways that will help us be better people going forward, but it is hard.

I've had death threats and my family have been threatened and I've had to have the police brought in; but the majority of people I have any interaction with are beautiful, wonderful people who also want to change the world for the better. So I will take those 'bots'. I will take those 0.01 percent of people because I think that the bigger change is more important and the bigger noise needs to be one of goodness and inclusivity. It's worth it but sometimes it's scary.

ABOVE Ruins of Disibodenberg Abbey

is key because we're communicators, we're not bossy Victorian school masters. We are people who are trying to get you passionate about something we're passionate about and the more I was allowed to show my eccentricities and my personality, the better I felt I was communicating. I'm not here to give you the facts, I'm here to start a conversation and lure you into your own investigations. Anyone could be a historian. Anyone can go down to a library, the archives, their local church, their local graveyard, and become curious. You don't need a PhD and an ivory tower university position to have an opinion on something from the past. The discipline has changed beyond recognition and I love it. It's democratising it and I think it's just beautiful.

Your new book, Femina, focusses on medieval women. Can you tell us a little about it?

Femina is big for me because it's years and years of research and thought and contemplation and rumination, looking at the state of things and then looking at my discipline. I think it's a big book and what I hope it will do is change the discipline. That's a bold claim, isn't it? But that's what I hope it will do. I hope it will make an impact because it's a collection of thousands of people's work: people on the coalface doing DNA research; doing archeological digs; doing archival research. I'm just the curator, but I've curated that material in a new way, which I think shows how magnificent the work being done is. It's bringing to light these people that we have never heard about or have been underwritten. It's not that they're not there, we just haven't looked for them.

I could have written 30 more chapters in *Femina*. What frustrates me is that a book that was published just last year about the early medieval period said that medieval women are unrecoverable. They're not unrecoverable but it takes effort and it takes a different way of doing things. Once you really knuckle down and get into the evidence it is so easy to tap into these people. Some of the ones that come to the fore in

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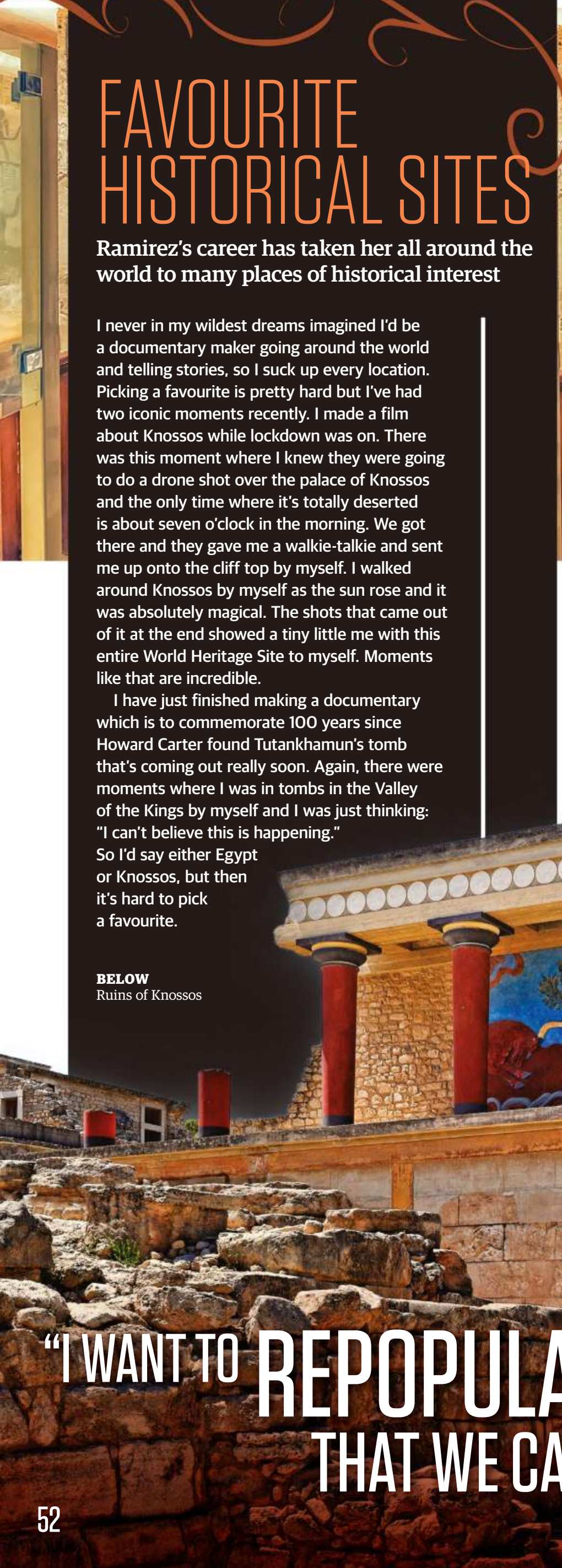
FAVOURITE HISTORICAL SITES

Ramirez's career has taken her all around the world to many places of historical interest

I never in my wildest dreams imagined I'd be a documentary maker going around the world and telling stories, so I suck up every location. Picking a favourite is pretty hard but I've had two iconic moments recently. I made a film about Knossos while lockdown was on. There was this moment where I knew they were going to do a drone shot over the palace of Knossos and the only time where it's totally deserted is about seven o'clock in the morning. We got there and they gave me a walkie-talkie and sent me up onto the cliff top by myself. I walked around Knossos by myself as the sun rose and it was absolutely magical. The shots that came out of it at the end showed a tiny little me with this entire World Heritage Site to myself. Moments like that are incredible.

I have just finished making a documentary which is to commemorate 100 years since Howard Carter found Tutankhamun's tomb that's coming out really soon. Again, there were moments where I was in tombs in the Valley of the Kings by myself and I was just thinking: "I can't believe this is happening." So I'd say either Egypt or Knossos, but then it's hard to pick a favourite.

BELOW
Ruins of Knossos



ABOVE
Inside a tomb in the Valley of the Kings

this book, they've been there all along. People like Hildegard of Bingen – we've known about her since she died and yet we just haven't bothered to frame our historical narratives around people like her.

So *Femina* is a book that has a number of agendas. One of them is to get us to look at the past less through rose-tinted spectacles. The past is us, just at a different time. The people of the past are just as complex, diverse, interesting, fascinating and multifaceted as we are today. I wanted the medieval period to look different through this book, but I also wanted to bring about a change in how we work as historians. I think as a rule we should be working as cross-disciplinary historians. We should be using all the evidence at our fingertips, because if I tried to talk about this year, 2022, just by looking at archival records or just by looking at newspaper reports, how is that going to tell you what it's like to be alive in 2022? I would need to bring in all the resources to even begin to tell you what it's like to be alive today. They're the things I'm trying to achieve, and in the process I'm trying to achieve a history that puts women back in the picture. We're 50 percent of the population but you would never think that if you picked up a history book.

"I WANT TO REPOPULATE THE PAST WITH OTHER PEOPLE THAT WE CAN SEE LIKE OURSELVES"

ABOVE-LEFT Sutton Hoo helmet

ABOVE The wives of Henry VIII

In the introduction to Femina you say that we need a new relationship with the past, one where everybody can feel like they are a part of it. How important is this idea to you when you are working on all your projects?

I'm really proud of my back-catalogue of documentaries. I look back on them and think I've made really good choices on the things that I've made. In my series *Raiders of the Lost Past*, I foregrounded issues of diversity and feminism in each programme without meaning to. I have tried to always draw in the things that mattered to me in the work I do.

In terms of *Femina*, when I studied history at school I looked so hard to find women, as many women did. I was drawn to the six wives of Henry VIII, because they're the only women I knew the names of and could pin a story to. That's tragic, isn't it? To think that I studied history at school for all those years and the only women I could get excited about were the wives of Henry VIII. That has changed an awful lot, but I want to repopulate the past with other people that we can see like ourselves. David Olusoga [a historian and friend of Ramirez] is doing this in terms of putting people of colour back into history. There are queer theorists putting people of different sexualities back into history. My little contribution is to put the frame around these women from the past and look at how many other people come into focus: poor people, people with disabilities, people from different backgrounds. That's what I mean by inclusive feminism. It's bringing everyone along with us back into the story because we were all there. We've always all been there, we've just not been seen. It's true but nobody says it blatantly and I'm a blatant person: this is the issue, we're not being seen.

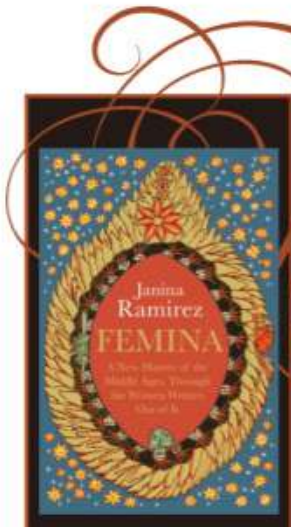
Which of the medieval women in Femina was your personal favourite to write about?

I loved writing about all of them but I think Hildegard stands out massively. Hildegard is the opening quote because her voice is so strong. One of the things I was talking about [at the Hay Festival] when we were launching the book was if these women will always remain out of reach. My interviewer was saying to me: "Isn't it sad that we'll never really understand their thoughts, their feelings, the way they identify, the way they express themselves?" But you kind of can with some of them. With Hildegard, she died at the age of 81 and left behind a body of work that was held together in this manuscript called the *Riesencodex*, which weighs the same as a bulldog. It's a massive book. But that's all her voice all the way through that book. Her music, her poetry, her plays, her theological work, her scientific work, all her thoughts, all the things that she wanted to express are in that book, and my God, her voice comes out loud. I hear her, I know her, and I went to her monastery at Disibodenberg by myself. It's on this deserted mountain top in Germany and I went on a rainy day and spent a whole day by myself in her monastery and I felt I was with her. I felt that she was there talking to me.

And Margery Kempe is literally screaming out of her book. Her voice is so loud: she's crying, she's wailing, she's screaming out of her book. So I do think we can get close to these women and as a result, I suppose, the ones I know better are the ones I just adore.

What do you think you have achieved with Femina that hasn't been done before?

I sound like I'm being incredibly overconfident here but I think it's an important book. I really do think that in the process of writing *Femina* I'm trying to make a change to how we have a relationship with the past. I'm trying to pull it out of ivory towers and put it in the hands of everyone. It is something we can all do. We have the internet now so we have a world of knowledge at our fingertips and we don't necessarily need it to be held behind gatekeepers and distributed to us by those that know. We can take control and we can do it ourselves. We should be more engaged with our past because you walk down any street and there's a story to be told. There's a past there and you're walking in the footprints of people who've gone before you and I really want to make that connection real and tangible and beautiful. The more we understand where we've come from, the better we will be going forward because we are so fast-paced now, we're so often looking forward that we're not taking time to look at where we've come from, but the lessons are all there. We can learn how to be better people by looking in history. The mistakes people have made and the errors we keep making as a species, we can learn from them and we can go forward and be better. I really believe I've written a book that hopefully will change the way we see the past and change the future we make together.



FEMINA:
A NEW HISTORY OF THE MIDDLE AGES, THROUGH THE WOMEN WRITTEN OUT OF IT
BY JANINA RAMIREZ IS OUT ON 21 JULY 2022 FROM WH ALLEN

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Zheng He

China's Greatest Explorer

Discover the seven great voyages of one of the most impressive adventurers in history

Written by Josh West

Zheng He was a Chinese Muslim soldier, diplomat and admiral, and is remembered as the greatest explorer in Chinese history. Captured and castrated at the age of ten, he quickly rose in status within the court of the Yongle Emperor thanks to his military and intellectual skills. For 20 years in the early 15th century, he led seven voyages of discovery around the Indian Ocean, travelling as far as Arabia and East Africa. These voyages spread Chinese influence and culture throughout the region and cemented China's hold over

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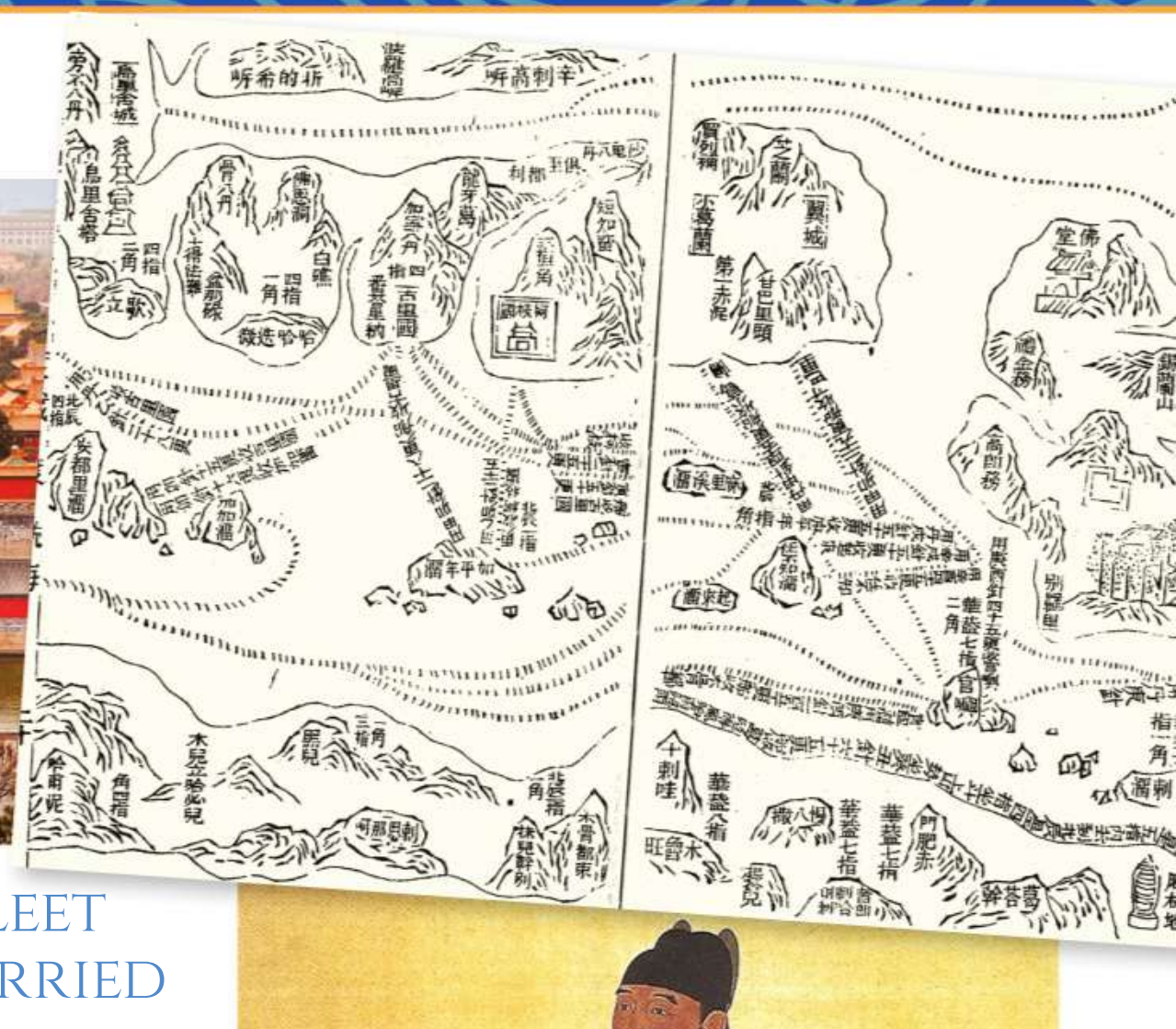

“The sheer scale of his fleet was incredible: 317 ships carried around 27,800 men”

much of Southeast Asia. They also planted the seed for the western world’s obsession with the riches and tales of the Far East.

Birth and early life

Zheng He was born Ma Sanbao in c.1371 in the Yunnan province of China. Ma was raised in the Hui community – Chinese Muslims descended from Mongol Turkish migrants. The surname Ma comes from the Chinese rendition of Mohammed and the family was descended from an early Mongol governor of Yunnan.

Yunnan province was the last Mongol stronghold in China after their Yuan dynasty had been overthrown by the Ming dynasty in 1368. In 1381, Ming armies reconquered the province and expelled or killed the Mongol administrators, including Ma’s father.

According to Edward Dreyer in his work *Zheng He: China and the Oceans in the Early Ming Dynasty*, Ma was discovered by a Ming general and taken prisoner. Like all male prisoners his age, Ma was castrated and sent into the army as an orderly. After years of military training, in 1390 Ma was sent to Beijing to serve Zhu Di, Prince of Yan and fourth son of the Hongwu Emperor, founder of the Ming Dynasty. It was at this time that his name was changed to Ma He.

Military service

Ma had already distinguished himself as a junior officer, and he proved this to his new master after joining him on his first successful campaign against the Mongols in 1390. Ma quickly earned Zhu Di’s trust and respect through his military successes, and under the prince’s patronage received a full education in literacy and languages not normally given to eunuchs.

Ma quickly became influential at the prince’s court, not least because of his unusual height. One contemporary described Ma as “seven chi [193cm] high, cheeks and a forehead that was high, glaring eyes, teeth that were well-shaped as shells, and a voice that was as loud as a bell.” This strength was put to the test in 1399 when he joined Zhu Di in war against the prince’s nephew.

In 1398, the Hongwu Emperor was succeeded by his grandson, the Jianwen Emperor. The new emperor had attempted to strip his uncle of his powers and Zhu Di rebelled against him. Ma was one of Zhu Di’s greatest commanders and accompanied him into the capital Nanjing in 1402, where he exiled his nephew and was declared the Yongle Emperor.

Chinese Expansion

As one of the new emperor’s most faithful servants, Ma was made grand director of the palace servants, the equivalent to a modern-day chief of staff. In 1304, the emperor also changed Ma He’s name to Zheng He in honour of his distinguished service in Beijing and Nanjing. Zheng means ‘proper’ or ‘correct’ and is associated with the government, while He means ‘peace’ or ‘a river’.

The new emperor had enormous plans for glorifying his kingdom. He restored the war-ravaged economy, moved the capital to Beijing, and began construction of the Forbidden City. He also planned to restore China’s position as the major maritime and cultural power in the East. China had been a naval power for 300 years, with sea-borne commerce stemming from the Chinese people’s demand for spices, aromatics and other goods.

Traditionally, the imperial court had been the beneficiary of tribute from the smaller states around Southeast Asia. This tribute not only gave protection to minor states but was also a sign that the emperor was indeed the Son of Heaven and the world’s most powerful ruler. This tradition had lapsed under the Mongol Yuan, but the emperor was determined to display

ABOVE Zheng He had been a close aid and servant to the future Yongle Emperor

TOP-RIGHT One of Zheng He’s sailing charts, showing India towards the top and Ceylon and Africa below

TOP-LEFT The Yongle Emperor started many impressive projects, including the construction of the Forbidden City

Zheng He
Hormuz
Venturing further than ever before, the treasure fleet finally reached Hormuz during Zheng He's fourth voyage.
China
Nanjing
The great capital of Nanjing was the origin of all of Zheng He's treasure voyages.
Aden
Considered the crossroads of Europe, Asia and Africa, Zheng He stopped at Aden three times throughout his seven expeditions.
Arabia
India
Africa
Champa
Zheng He and his fleet were welcomed by the King of Champa. They traded blue and white Ming porcelains for rare woods.
Calicut
Calicut, located in southern India, was the final destination of Zheng He's first three voyages.
Malacca
A strategic port for Zheng He, Malacca quickly became a tributary state of China.
Malindi
After exploring the eastern coast of Africa, Zheng He finally reached Malindi on his fourth journey.
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–The Ming Voyages–
The trade, tribute and exploration routes of Zheng He

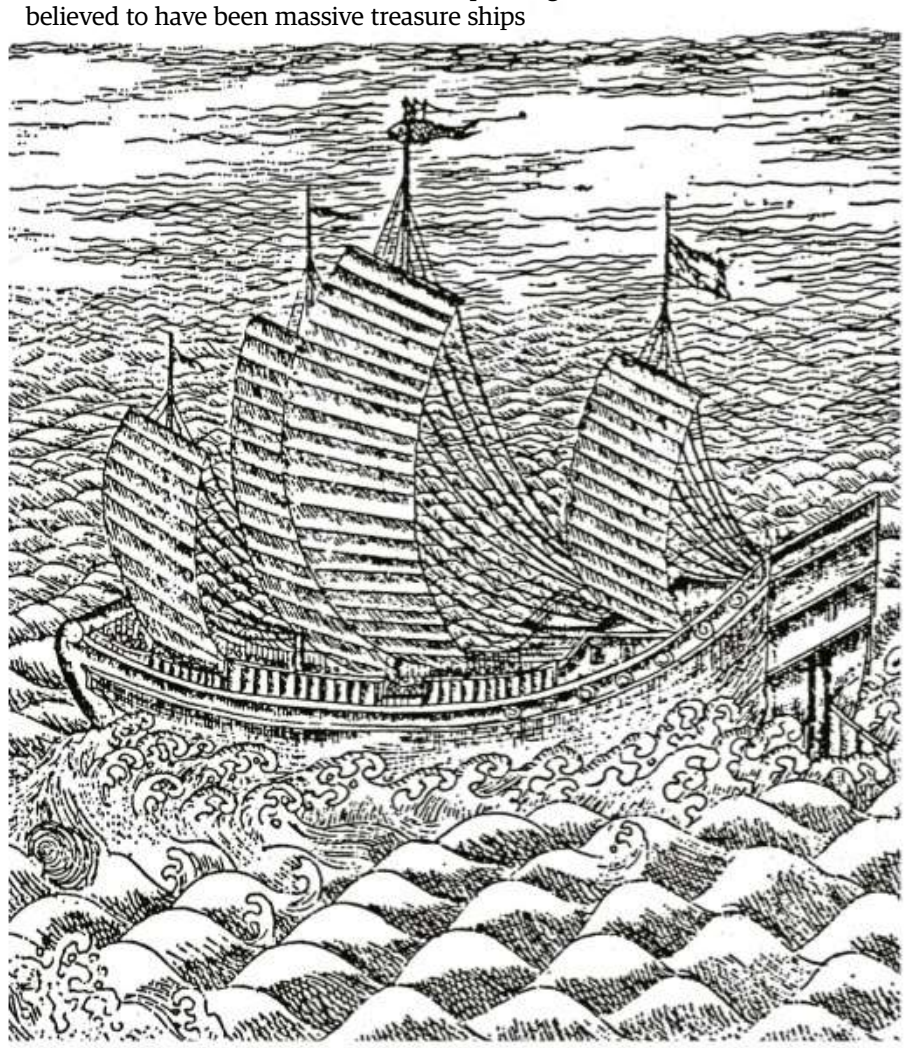
his divine providence. Accordingly, he commissioned the construction of 3,500 ships, all overseen by Zheng He.

In 1405, Zheng He was named zhèngshi (chief envoy) to the emperor and grand admiral of an enormous fleet of ships. For the next 20 years, it was Zheng He's mission to travel what was known as the 'Western Ocean' to spread Chinese influence, secure naval dominance and gain tribute for the emperor.

Early voyages

Zheng He's first voyage left China in 1405, and the sheer scale of his fleet was incredible: 317 ships carried around 27,800 men. These wooden vessels were the largest the world had seen and would see for another 500 years. The 62 treasure ships (baochuan) that led the fleet and carried the treasure bound for foreign rulers were recorded as being 127 metres long and had nine sails (Christopher Colombus's Santa Maria was only 19 metres long). It would not be until the iron-hulled steamers of the 19th century that ships were built so large again.

BELOW Of the 250 vessels that made up Zheng He's fleet, 63 of them are believed to have been massive treasure ships



The huge vessels were equipped with state-of-the-art water-tight compartments, magnetic compasses and paper maps. So many linguists were required for the voyage that a whole language institute was created in Nanjing.

After leaving Nanjing, Zheng He's fleet visited the small states of Southeast Asia including Vietnam, Thailand, Malaca and Java. He then headed to India, visiting Calicut on the Malabar Coast and Sri Lanka. Zheng He would lead a delegation to the local ruler and present messages of peace and goodwill. Large and plentiful gifts would then be presented – including silk, tea, painted scrolls and fine Ming porcelain – before inviting the ruler to pay tribute to the emperor. This first expedition returned to China in 1407.

Zheng He's second voyage (1408-09) followed much the same route. For his third, Zheng He sailed beyond India's ports and all the way to Hormuz on the Persian Gulf, where his Islamic heritage proved useful, before travelling all the way to Samudera on the southern tip of Sumatra. Zheng He was merely following pre-

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Measuring Up

How Zheng He's treasure ship compared to other famous vessels

Zheng He Treasure Ship

Years: 1405-33 • Length: 127m
Width: 55m • Masts: 6 • Crew: 2,800 (estimated)

Santa Maria

Years: Unknown – 1492 • Length: 19m
Width: 5.5m • Masts: 3 • Crew: 40

TOP Zheng He's mission was twofold: find new trading partners and spread word of the emperor's power

ABOVE A reconstruction of one of Zheng He's treasure ships, currently in Nanjing

established sea routes, but what made his voyages different was the diplomacy and trade he conducted along the way.

When Zheng He's expert diplomacy failed, his formidable army and navy awed local rulers into submission. Zheng He had numerous scrapes on these voyages. On his first, he encountered a group of notorious Sumatran pirates, led by Che'en Tsuri, who had been disrupting trade on the Malacca Straight. Zheng He attacked and defeated them, killing over 5,000. Likewise on his second voyage, King Alagonakkara of Sri Lanka attempted to raid the treasure boats; Zheng He captured him and took him to the Yongle Emperor as a prisoner. Settling these local disputes worked towards the emperor's goal of China being seen as the chief power in the East.

Later Expeditions

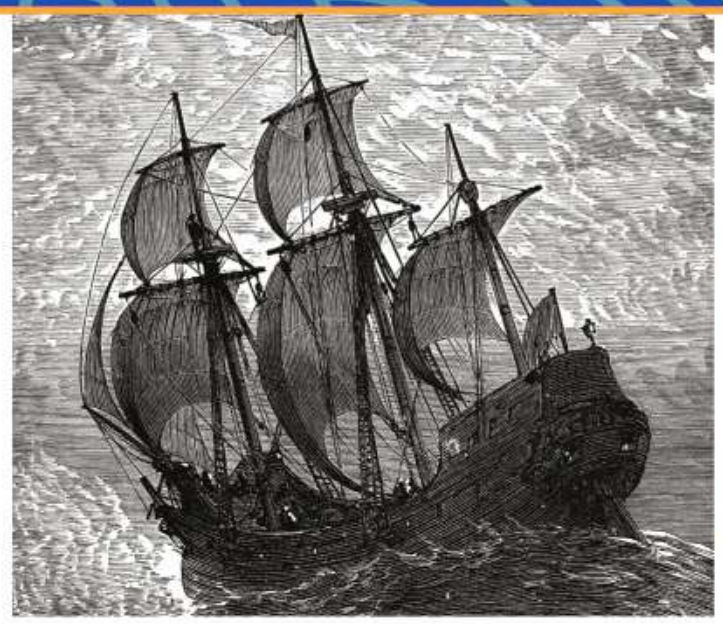
Zheng He's fourth voyage (1413-15) was his most ambitious. After cruising Southeast Asia and India, he continued to Hormuz before dividing the fleet; one detachment sailed down Arabia to Dhofar and Aden, while another proceeded to Mecca and into Egypt via the Red Sea. The fleet then sailed down the east African coast, visiting Mogadishu, Malindi and even as far down as Mozambique. Zheng He returned to the Yongle court with no less than 30 ambassadors to pay tribute to the emperor.

Having secured these new sea routes, Zheng He's fifth (1417-19) and sixth (1421-24) voyages followed the same pattern, with the latter voyage returning all the diplomats home. Just as important as the Chinese goods Zheng He took to these places were the gifts and culture he brought back. He returned from his trips to Africa with ostriches, zebras, rhinos, lions and camels to glorify the Yongle court. The giraffe that Zheng He brought back from Malindi in 1415 was thought by the court to be a qilin, a mystical creature of Chinese folklore, and was taken as proof of the Mandate of Heaven on the emperor's reign.

Death of Zheng He

In September 1424, as Zheng He was returning from his sixth voyage, the Yongle Emperor died. He was succeeded by the Hongxi Emperor (1424-26), who swiftly put an end to the costly naval expeditions. The money the emperor poured into them was deemed to be needed for war with the Mongols and rebuilding of the Great Wall. Zheng He was instead named commander of the garrison at Nanjing in 1425.

Hongxi's successor, the Xuande Emperor (1426-35) was likewise against the voyages. First was the cost, and he was reported to have said: "Some far-off countries pay their tribute to me at much expense and difficulties, all of which are not my own



Mayflower

Years: c.1609 – 1624 ◆ Length: 27m
Width: 7.6m ◆ Masks: 3 ◆ Crew: 30

HMS Victory

Years: 1765 – 1831 ◆ Length: 69m
Width: 15.8m ◆ Masks: 3 ◆ Crew: 821

Titanic

Years: 1911-12 ◆ Length: 269m
Width: 28.2m ◆ Masks: N/A ◆ Crew: 900

> "He returned from his trips to Africa with ostriches, zebras, rhinos, lions and camels"

wish." Second, and more importantly, were his Confucian principles, which had disappeared from the imperial court under the Yongle Emperor. Xuande believed these voyages were against the isolationist values laid down by his dynasty's founder, the Hongwu Emperor, as well as Confucian beliefs that had governed Chinese political thought for centuries.

However, Zheng He was dispatched on one last voyage of discovery in 1431. The ageing admiral sailed along his familiar routes around Southeast Asia, India, Sri Lanka, the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea and down the east coast of Africa. When sailing back to China in spring 1433, Zheng He died suddenly near Calicut, one of the ports he'd visited on his first great voyage 20 years earlier. Historians are conflicted between whether Zheng He was buried at sea or returned to Nanjing and buried, either way a tomb was built for him there that still stands today.

Aftermath and legacy

Upon Zheng He's death, the Xuande Emperor passed the Haijin edict, a ban on sea trading and exploration that lasted in different forms until the 1820s. Alongside this isolation, the Confucian monks that ran the Ming court attempted to minimise Zheng He's achievements or even wipe them from the record altogether. All the explorer's records were destroyed and his colossal ships were left to rot. Chinese craftsmen soon lost the skills needed to build such enormous vessels, and ships that size were not seen again for four centuries. It was only in the last century that Zheng He and his voyages were rediscovered and celebrated by the Chinese and historians.

But these historians are split as to the success and legacy of Zheng He's great missions, and whether they were even necessary. Some argue the voyages performed little purpose other than to fan the Yongle Emperor's vanity. Historian Gang Deng argues they were in fact a manhunt for the emperor's nephew, the Jianwen Emperor, calling them "the largest-scale manhunt on water in history". Meanwhile Mark Cartwright argues "the original aim of the voyages – to secure foreign tribute – was largely unsuccessful outside of Southeast Asia." The cost of these voyages dwarfed the returns the imperial court received and the foreign states Zheng He visited, while interested in trade, were unwilling to accept that China was the centre of the world.

While Zheng He did not establish a vast commercial empire like Columbus or James Cook, his missions helped to expand China's political influence beyond Southeast Asia for the next 50 years. In addition, his voyages inspired swathes of Chinese emigration to the places he visited, as well as fostering good relations between China, its neighbours and the Islamic world. His spreading of Chinese culture and treasure across the Indian Ocean also fostered a fascination with the Far East, its culture, riches and Ming porcelain.

Zheng He should be remembered alongside Marco Polo and Columbus as one of the greatest navigators and explorers in the Age of Exploration. Through his skills, his immense navy travelled vast distances and his expert diplomacy spread Chinese culture to countless other societies. As he himself wrote on a tablet in Fujian province before his final voyage: "We have traversed more than one hundred thousand li [27,000 nautical miles] of immense waterspaces and have beheld in the ocean huge waves like mountains, and we have set eyes on barbarian regions far away hidden in a blue transparency of light vapours, while our sails, loftily unfurled like clouds day and night, continued their course as rapidly as a star."

BELOW There are monuments to Zheng He all around Southeast Asia

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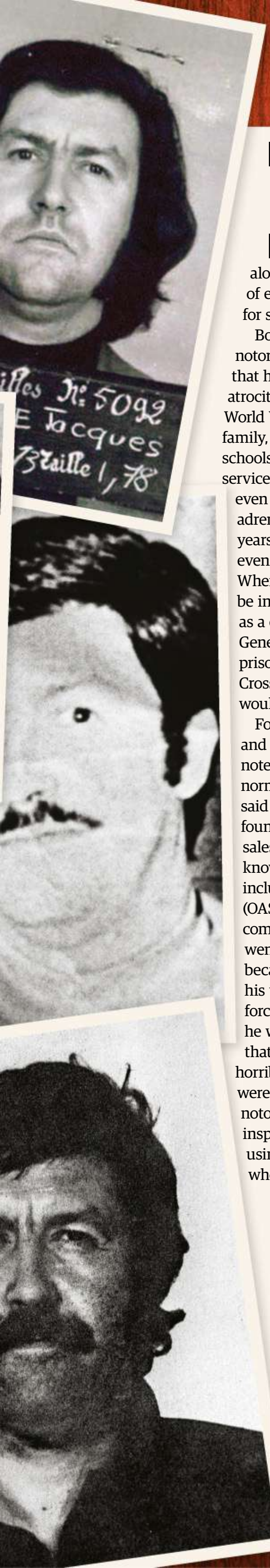
JACQUES MESRINE

MAN OF A THOUSAND FACES

How France's prince of thieves flouted the law and became a folk hero

Written by Ben Biggs

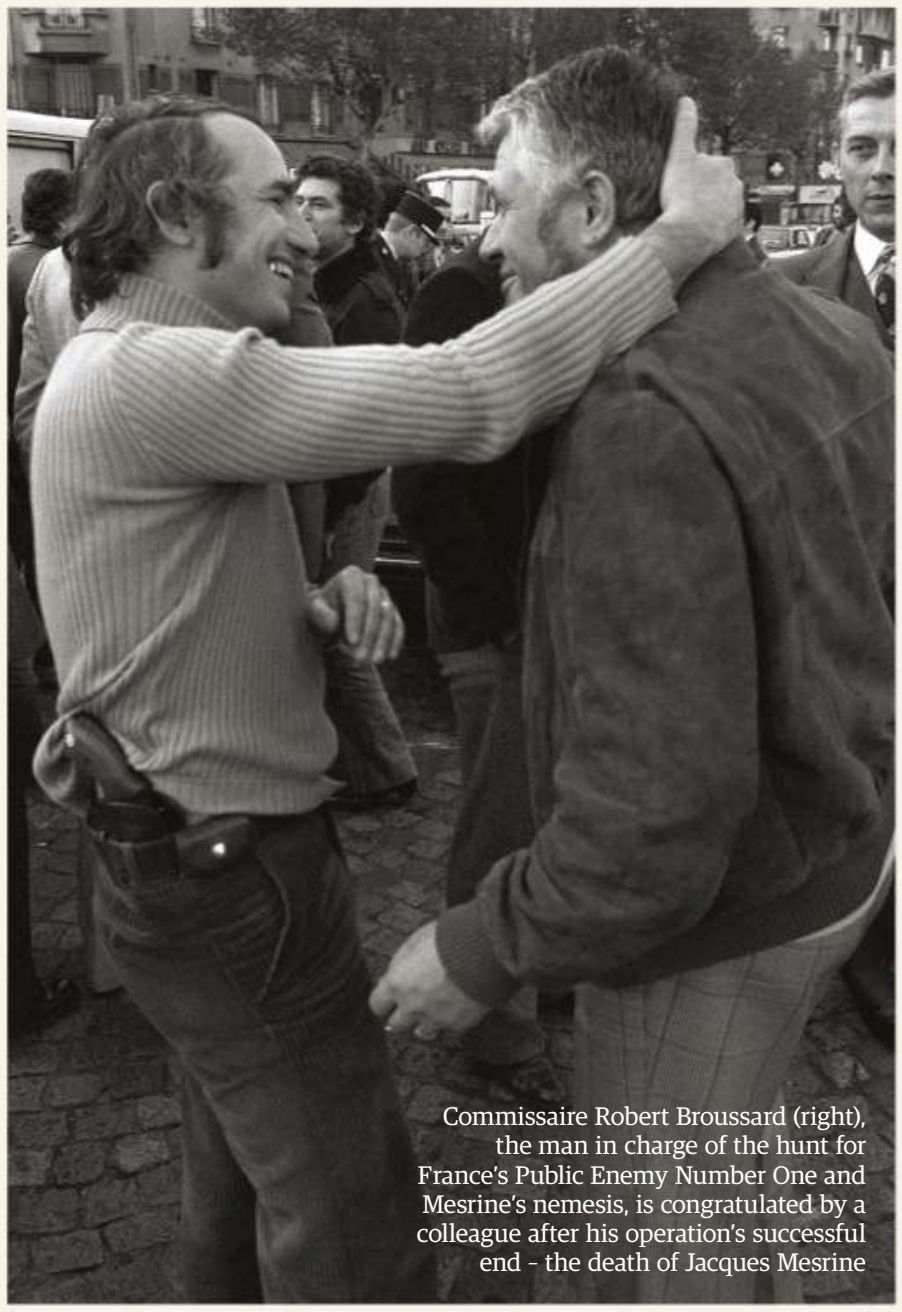


Kidnapping was nothing new to the international fugitive and stick-up merchant Jacques Mesrine. By 1979, his career as a professional criminal stretched back more than 20 years, and alongside murder and robbery he had a considerable amount of experience holding wealthy individuals against their will for substantial ransoms.

Born in 1936, Mesrine had always sought out action and notoriety, inspired by the US crime fiction and box office hits that he lapped up as a child and, perhaps in some small way, the atrocities he had witnessed the Nazis inflicting on France during World War II. Despite his respectable upbringing in a middle-class family, he was a disruptive pupil and was expelled from several schools before being drafted into the French Army for his national service. The camaraderie under pressure appealed to Mesrine, even if the discipline did not. But most of all, he thrived on the adrenaline of combat. In one of the books he would write many years later, he described himself as a "kamikaze of crime" and even as a young adult he craved the thrill of life on the edge. When the Algerian War broke out in 1954, he badly wanted to be in the thick of the fighting and volunteered for special duty as a commando. After five years of combat and unconfirmed Geneva Convention-breaking orders to execute and torture prisoners, Mesrine left the army with a prestigious French Cross for Military Valour and an aptitude for violence that would serve him well in his criminal career.

For better or for worse, active military service changes a man, and Mesrine was unable to adapt to normal life. His family noted that he had even less respect for authority and societal norms upon his return from this brutal colonial war. His father said he was "never quite right" after Algeria, and Mesrine soon found a way to escape his mundane civilian life as a textiles salesman – in the fringes of society. He was seen in bars known to be frequented by criminals from all walks of life, including the paramilitary group Organisation armee secrete (OAS). He, almost inevitably, got involved in crime at this point, committing burglaries and eventually a bank robbery that went wrong and saw him arrested. Politics and criminality became fused as he tried to justify his actions by claiming his war experiences had warped his mind, that the army had forced him to kill and torture in the name of France, that he was rebelling against the political and financial systems that held him. He had a point – Algeria was an infamously horrible conflict. At least, that's what many people in France were beginning to believe. But while he was using his growing notoriety as a soapbox to spout poetic-sounding, politically inspired rhetoric to gain a national following, Mesrine was using his military skills to plan crimes. He dealt with anyone who opposed his goals by killing them.

"With Mesrine's flight across international borders came a host of different faces and guises"



Commissaire Robert Broussard (right), the man in charge of the hunt for France's Public Enemy Number One and Mesrine's nemesis, is congratulated by a colleague after his operation's successful end – the death of Jacques Mesrine

In the first half of the 1960s, Mesrine continued planning and executing robberies, networking with organised crime gangs across Europe and building a fearsome reputation as a professional crook not to be crossed. This involved the occasional collateral killing, including the murder of a crooked Arab associate who beat up his girlfriend – a murder that Mesrine got away with but later admitted to in his book.

His 'normal' life during this period was punctuated with apparently genuine efforts to fit into society and abandon his life of crime. He showed some aptitude for making models in an architectural design company, but was one of the first to be made redundant when it experienced difficulties. Then his parents rented him a restaurant in the country in the hope that getting him out of the city would focus his energy towards a respectable occupation. Again, he was moderately successful at running the place, but couldn't escape his past. A visit by the owner found Mesrine socialising and plotting with old associates. There was no doubt he was intelligent and resourceful, but if Mesrine was struggling between the temptation to return to his criminal lifestyle and will to go straight, then fate was playing him a cruel hand. Power, money, women and undoubtedly a greater degree of control over his own destiny came with the package as an underworld player, and it was intoxicating. "You don't steal for love or cash, you steal for the risk," he wrote. "You choose to cross the line because you know it means you can never go back."

Mesrine's crimes became more audacious and atrocious as the years passed. He robbed a Parisian fashion outlet, a Swiss jewellery store and a French hotel in the skiing haven of Chamonix, before fleeing the authorities to Quebec, Canada.

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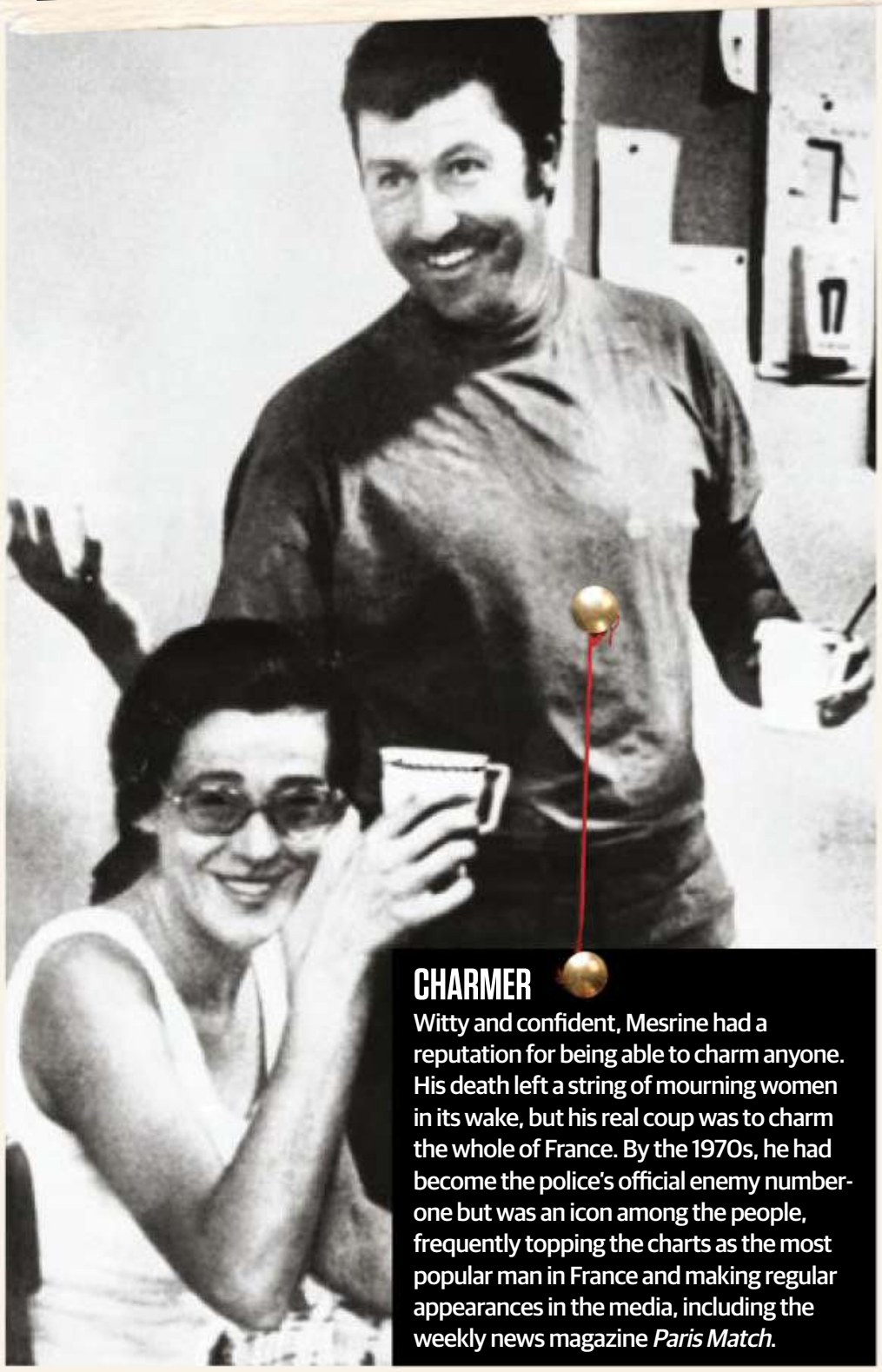
MASTER OF DISGUISE



CHARMER

Witty and confident, Mesrine had a reputation for being able to charm anyone. His death left a string of mourning women in its wake, but his real coup was to charm the whole of France. By the 1970s, he had become the police's official enemy number-one but was an icon among the people, frequently topping the charts as the most popular man in France and making regular appearances in the media, including the weekly news magazine *Paris Match*.

BANDIT

Make no mistake about it, Mesrine was a dangerous man and a cold-blooded murderer. He boasted in his book of killing at least 39 – apparently they had "deserved it" and he certainly showed no remorse for any of the murders. While on the run from jail in Canada, two park wardens approached him while he was shooting targets with a friend in a forest near Plessisville. They were simply inquiring whether they had a license for the weapons and wanted to search Mesrine's vehicle. He complied at first but when one of the rangers suddenly recognised Mesrine as a fugitive, he murdered them both on the spot and later claimed self defence.

ABOVE Mesrine photographed with a friend on 16 May 1978. Just eight days earlier, he had escaped from the La Santé prison in Paris. He would go on to rob a casino and a bank

ABOVE-RIGHT Mesrine pictured in 1970 in one of his many disguises. He is armed with an assault rifle as well as a pistol

He was becoming more adept at disguise, his favourite being a policeman, which he could easily pull off through his sheer conviction in his own authority. As a writer and a frequent interviewee too, he played many roles and showed many facets to his character: he could don the 'folk hero' hat one day and convince anyone he was a passionate anarchist rebelling against 'the man', the next he would scoff at this reputation – he was far deeper and more complicated than that. From the prison cell in which he was held for a year in the mid 1970s, he wrote poetry to his amoureux and lawyer, the young Martine Malinbaum. Perhaps this was a softer side to Mesrine reserved for the women he wooed, but it's equally possible that he was just a bored and frustrated convict. Love letters to his girlfriend on the outside were as good a way to pass the time as any, although Malinbaum today refuses to believe that Mesrine was anything but sincere.

"He escaped jail, was caught, escaped again, then embarked on a bank robbing spree"

With his flight to Canada in 1969 and a string of serious offences committed across the country, Mesrine became an international fugitive, popping up on Interpol's radar. With his new girlfriend, former prostitute Jeanne Schneider, he attempted to kidnap a disabled millionaire and hold him for ransom. When that failed, they fled to the USA as tourists, witnessed the launch of Apollo 11 at Cape Canaveral, got arrested in Arkansas and were then extradited to Canada. Mesrine was given ten years in the maximum-security wing of Saint-Vincent-de-Paul prison. Just prior to his incarceration, he was given a few seconds to say something to a Quebecois TV crew, and in that brief moment, Mesrine was able to endear himself to the nation. "Vive le Quebec libre," he quipped with a smile. He was quoting Charles de Gaulle's revolutionary and highly controversial phrase: "Long live free Quebec," which the French president had uttered on an official visit to Canada two years before.

Mesrine promptly escaped jail a few weeks later, was caught, escaped again and then embarked on a bank robbing spree. Sometimes he hit more than one branch in the same day, and once, the same bank twice in three days. He revelled in his criminality, loved the notoriety and enjoyed flouting the efforts of the infuriated Canadian government to bring him to heel.

AUTHOR

Capitalising on his popularity, Mesrine wrote an autobiography while in prison called *L'Instinct De Mort* (*Killer Instinct*) and had it smuggled out to a publisher. Its publication threw the French courts into uproar and brought about a law that would prevent him and future criminals from profiting in this way from their crimes. This notorious book even claimed a life: Mesrine was incensed at the decision and tried to extort money from publishers, sending them threatening letters in 1979. Five years after his death, it was republished by Champ Libre Editions. A few months later the company's founder was discovered dead in a car park with bullet wounds forming a square – the mark of an underworld hit indicating an unfulfilled contract.

CAGED TIGER

Although he enjoyed some popularity in jail (apparently inmates would light cigars for him), Mesrine was not one to suffer being contained. Before his transfer to the high-security Canadian prison of Saint Vincent de Paul he was able to rip the handle off an aluminium mug and sharpen it against the wall. When the transfer day came, he held it to a prison warder's throat, stole his keys and locked him in the cell. He had the foresight and audacity to stop in the kitchens to steal food before he fled into the woods.

REVOLUTIONARY

The killing of Mesrine shocked France and made many pause to consider the circumstances: he seemed to use revolutionary rhetoric to justify his actions, but having met activist Charles Bauer in prison he had moved further to the political left and was campaigning for prisoners' rights. His death came less than two months after left-wing journalist Pierre Goldman had been shot dead by a far-right group of vigilantes whose aim was to clear France of criminals and leftists. This case was handled questionably and quickly abandoned by the police.

He even had the gall to try to break back into the prison he had recently escaped to free some of his friends, wounding guards in the attempt. From Canada to the US to Colombia, to Spain and, ultimately, back to his beloved France: with Mesrine's flight across international borders came a host of different faces and guises that allowed him to evade the authorities and continue his spree. "Some like golf or skiing," he said frankly. "I like armed robbery."

As a former policeman for the Directorate of Territorial Security (DST), France's national intelligence agency in the 1970s, then a writer for the right-wing weekly journal *Minute*, Jacques Tillier began writing about Mesrine. Tillier went out of his way to destroy the 'honourable' Robin Hood image that Mesrine had so carefully cultivated back home. At first a furious Mesrine threatened to kill Tillier, but then he seemed to relent and offered him an exclusive interview. Tillier was subsequently kidnapped and beaten relentlessly by Mesrine and his accomplice Charlie Bauer. Unbelievably, Tillier survived his horrific injuries and played dead until the two men had left the cave they had lured him to, before crawling out to seek help. He lost the full use of his arm.

On 2 November 1979, two months after his 'interview' with Tillier, Mesrine was gunned down in his gold BMW on the outskirts of Paris by French police in a sting operation. An investigation had traced him to the flat of his girlfriend Sylvia Jeanjacquot and, given Mesrine's criminal record and interviews in which he claimed he would never be taken alive, the police took no chances.

Mesrine's death came just as the bubble of his antihero reputation burst, but it seems that he had anticipated the end and no longer cared what the public thought of him anyway. In an audiotape epitaph found in his flat, recorded over the maudlin soundtrack to the movie *Midnight Express*, Mesrine had recorded a message for Jeanjacquot that ended with a refreshingly honest reflection on his life. "What is terrible is that some people will try to make me into a hero, and there are no heroes in crime," he admitted, adding with a rare hint of self-awareness that "there are just men out on the edge who do not respect the law."

TOP-LEFT Mesrine would go on to escape from the high-security La Santé prison after serving less than five years of a 20-year sentence

ABOVE When police finally caught up with Mesrine, they fired 20 bullets at him at point-blank range. Fifteen of them found their target, before a coup de grâce was administered with a pistol

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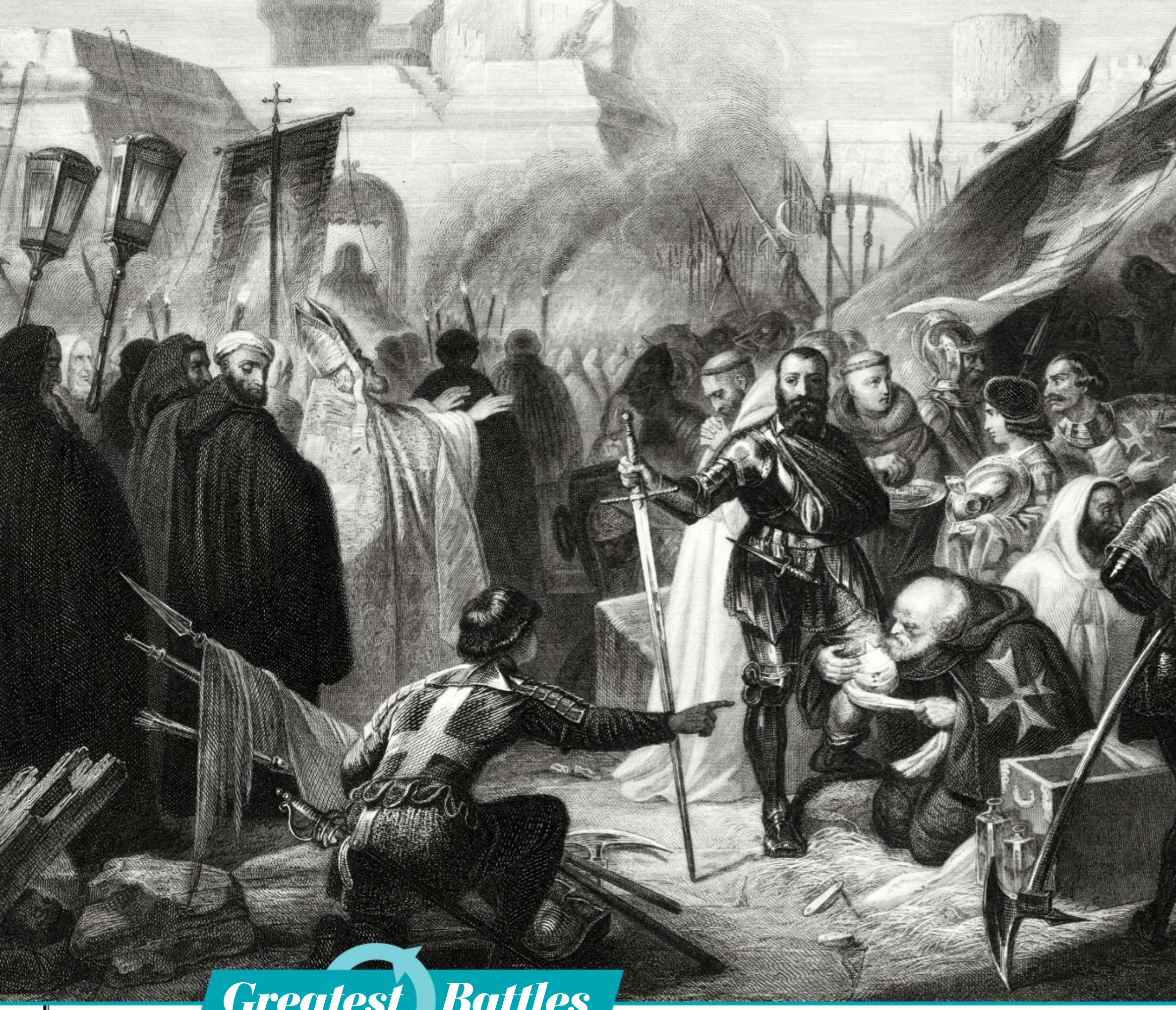

Greatest Battles

SIEGE OF RHODES

DODECANESE ISLANDS OF GREECE, 23 MAY – 17 AUG 1480

Written by William E Welsh

Knights Hospitaller Grand Master Pierre d'Aubusson stood atop the battlements of the citadel of Rhodes on 24 May 1480. He watched intently as the Ottoman host prepared a great battery a short distance north of the stronghold. The Turkish soldiers prepared a battery of three giant basilisks that they aimed at the Tower of St Nicholas, which stood on the far end of a quarter-mile long mole on the east side of the port's narrow galley harbour. Ever since Constantinople fell to Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II in 1453, the Knights Hospitallers, whose base was the island in the Aegean Sea, had expected an invasion.

D'Aubusson, who came from central France, had served as a Knight Hospitaller on Rhodes for 26 years. During that time, he had gained invaluable experience in diplomacy, naval warfare and

Hospitaller Grand Master Pierre d'Aubusson receives thanks for having forced the Ottoman Turks to raise their siege of Rhodes

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Two Neapolitan ships arrive with reinforcements at the end of the siege

Image source: wiki/World Imaging

siegecraft. During his tenure as grand master, he had overseen the construction of new towers, bulwarks and batteries to enhance the citadel's defences. He was confident that he had done everything in his power to prepare for the inevitable siege of the fortress by the Ottoman Turks.

Although the Byzantine Empire, which once controlled the island, had built land walls around the port, the Hospitallers set to work immediately improving its fortifications by adding seawalls. The citadel of Rhodes possessed two artificial harbours with protective moles (breakwaters) wide enough to be fortified with trenches and towers. The Hospitallers used the northern harbour for their galleys, and the larger main port adjacent to the south for mercantile vessels. From a geographical standpoint, its one major drawback was that it was just 19km from the Anatolian mainland, and therefore the Ottoman sultan could transport an invasion army by ship to the island.

In the successful siege of Constantinople in 1453, Sultan Mehmed II had relied heavily on giant bronze cannon, known as basilisks and bombards, which had the capability of demolishing the metropolis' high outer walls. The Byzantine Empire was in its death throes at the time and the conquest completed its demise. Afterwards, the sultan went to war with the Venetian Republic. He succeeded in completing the Ottoman conquest of Greece and most of the northern Aegean islands.

After the fall of Constantinople, the Knights Hospitaller expected an imminent attack on their citadel by the victorious Ottoman army. For that reason, they began to make improvements to their fortress so that it might withstand the Ottoman gunpowder artillery. In the decades preceding the siege, the knights had constructed three stone towers at the end of the moles that protected the two artificial harbours. The Tower of St Nicholas graced the long mole on the eastern side of the galley harbour that housed the Hospitaller navy. The towers of Naillac and St Angelo were perched on shorter moles to defend the west and east sides, respectively, of the main port.

Sultan Mehmed did not initially intend to launch a formal siege of Rhodes, and he repeatedly sent envoys to request tribute after Constantinople fell to his army. The sultan might have been inclined to leave the Hospitallers alone during his reign provided they paid a nominal tribute and refrained from attacking Ottoman merchant vessels. But

Knights Hospitaller Grand Master Jean de Lastic, who ruled Rhodes from 1437 to 1454, steadfastly refused to pay tribute. His successors did the same.

D'Aubusson, who was elected grand master in 1476, oversaw construction work that shortened the three harbour towers so that they could better withstand gunpowder artillery and also the violent recoil of their own cannons. The Hospitallers made the most dramatic changes to the Tower of St Nicholas, shortening the tower so that it was more like a fort. It had artillery batteries on two stories and was protected by an angled bulwark.

In keeping with the latest advances in Italian fortifications, D'Aubusson also supervised the construction of a faussebraye, an Italian word for outerworks, which protected the landward walls of the fortress. The faussebraye not only held back assault troops from moving scaling ladders and siege towers against the main walls, but also protected the base of the main walls from mining and artillery fire. Last, D'Aubusson stockpiled enough food stores and ammunition to enable the garrison to hold out for two years.

After several attempts during his reign to get the knights to pay tribute to him and accept status as a vassal state, Mehmed resolved to attack the island. Instead of leading the assault on the fortress of Rhodes personally, as he had done at Constantinople, he entrusted the siege to Vizier Mesih Pasha, a Byzantine Greek who had converted to Islam. Two advisors who had visited Rhodes told Mehmed that the citadel's towers and walls were crumbling. They also claimed that some of the Hospitallers were on the verge of mutiny. None of this was true. On this flawed intelligence, Mehmed sent the vizier to take the fortress by force.

After a failed attempt to secure a foothold on Rhodes in December 1479, the Ottoman fleet returned to Rhodes on 23 May 1480. The Turks immediately established a siege battery, which consisted of three 5.5-metre basilisks, aimed at the Tower of St Nicholas. Mesih's first step was to try to capture the galley harbour so that he could bring heavy artillery and siege equipment right up to the northeastern corner of the citadel.

The guns began a steady bombardment of the Tower of St Nicholas, but it was a slow process given that the cumbersome bronze guns, which flung 635kg stone balls, were difficult to load and fire. They began firing the mortars into the city to terrify the local populace inside. The three basilisks trained on the Tower of St Nicholas inflicted considerable damage on the thick stone walls. The bombardment of the Tower of St Nicholas continued unabated for ten days, during which time the basilisks fired 300 stone balls. Realising that the Ottoman commander was fixated on the Tower of St Nicholas, D'Aubusson sent additional troops to Fabrizio Del Carretto – the knight responsible for directing the troops defending the tower.

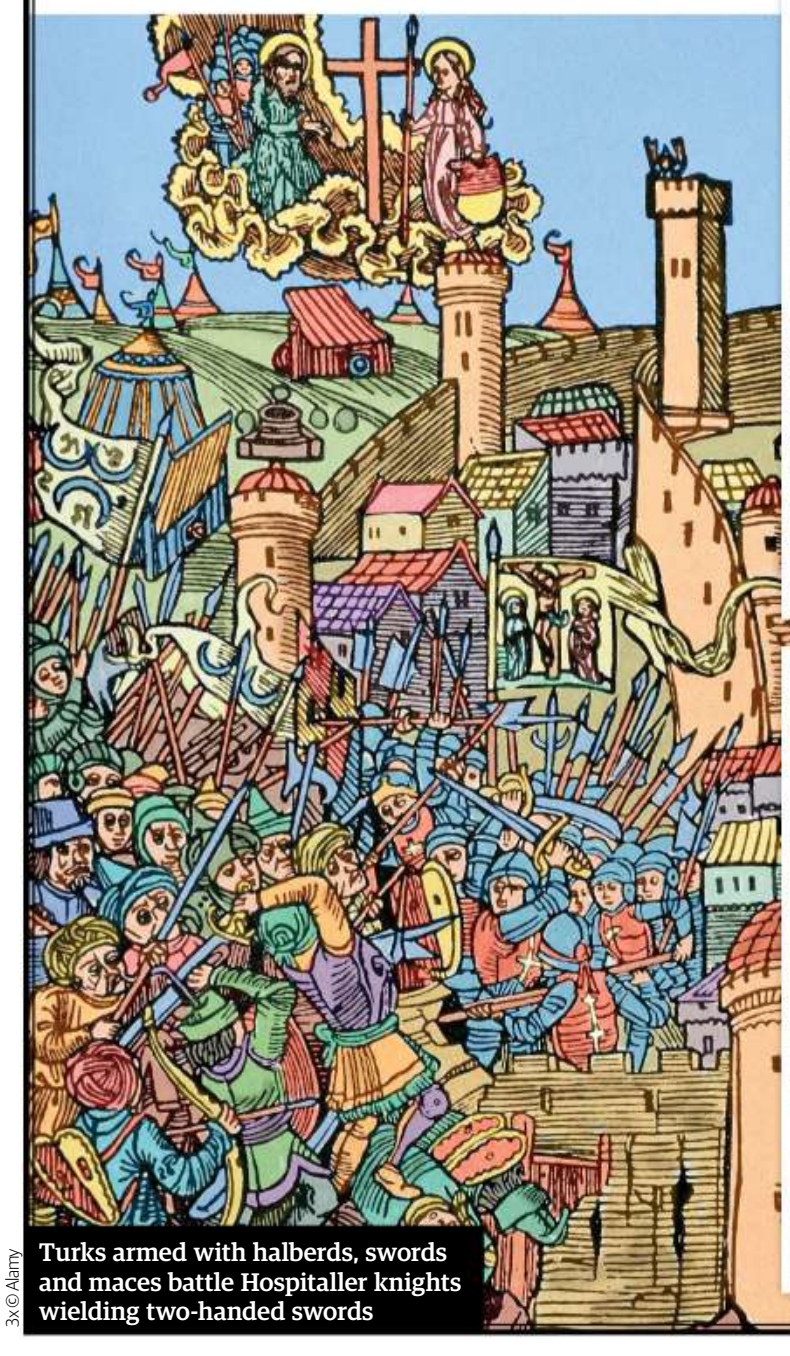
While Del Carretto and his men repaired breaches in the tower's defences with timber and stone, D'Aubusson ordered groups of soldiers and sailors, as well as hundreds of Greek residents, to repair and improve the mole's defences. Working day and night, the labourers built a wooden palisade with an earthen rampart on the mole. The Hospitallers deployed arquebusiers, longbowmen and crossbowmen in the earthworks on the mole, which exchanged shots with Turkish arquebusiers and bowmen along the shoreline of the galley harbour.

The Turks launched their first major assault on the Tower of St Nicholas on 3 June. Ottoman galleys landed troops at the end of the mole. The Hospitallers met the attacking force with a barrage of musket balls and crossbow bolts. In addition, some of the Christian troops hurled terra-cotta pots containing Greek fire at the Ottoman vessels as they approached the shore to disembark troops.

Over the course of the next two weeks, the Ottoman artillery continued to shell the Tower of St Nicholas. By the end of this period, the tower was for all intents and purposes demolished. But the Ottoman troops still needed to occupy the mole if they wanted to use the harbour.

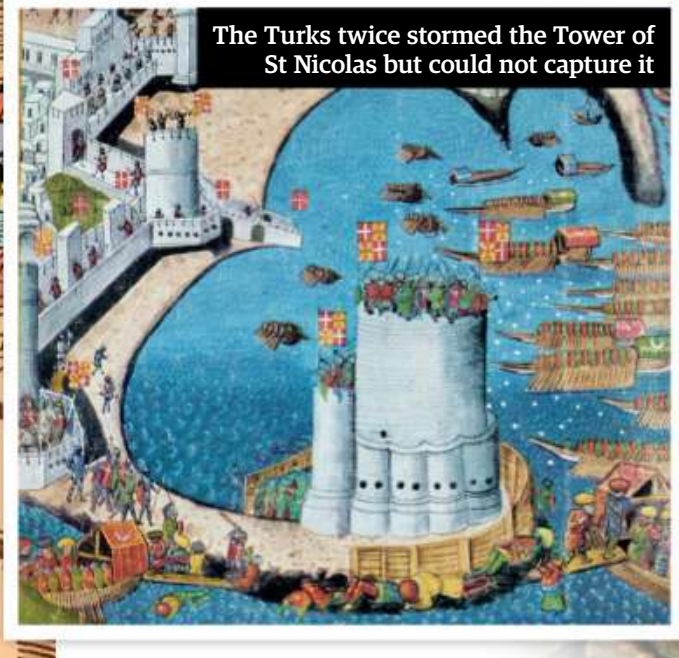
As the two sides continued to fire artillery and missile weapons at each other each day, Ottoman engineers built a floating bridge. Mesih Pasha intended to have his troops install the bridge so that they could use it to fight their way onto the mole. The Turks placed the floating bridge under cover of darkness on the night of 18-19 June.

In the pre-dawn hours, elite Turkish janissary slave-soldiers, wearing their customary tall Bork white-felt caps, began to cross the bridge. The fighting grew in intensity once the sun had risen. In addition to the Christian arquebusiers, archers and crossbowmen, Hospitaller knights clad in plate armour wielding two-handed swords cut down scores of janissaries. Hospitaller batteries opened a furious fire on the bridge in an effort to destroy it. As janissaries clad in mail-and-plate cuirasses wielding halberds, maces and yatagans fought hand-to-hand with Del Carretto's troops at the



Turks armed with halberds, swords and maces battle Hospitaller knights wielding two-handed swords

Mesih Pasha's army breached the outer wall of the port of Rhodes, but the Hospitallers counterattacked and drove them out



The Turks twice stormed the Tower of St Nicolas but could not capture it

3x© Alamy

tower, Ottoman galleys deposited other Turkish troops on the mole from the seaward side.

To fend off the Ottoman galleys, the Knights Hospitaller manoeuvred a few of their galleys out of the commercial harbour into the open waters. The galleys towed fireships which floated into the middle of the attacking Turkish ships – they succeeded in setting fire to and sinking four Ottoman galleys.

It did not take long for the Hospitaller cannon to destroy the pontoon bridge. Having been struck repeatedly by stone shot, the bridge eventually collapsed. In just a few hours the Ottoman army lost 2,500 men.

Mesih Pasha decided it was time to try to breach the land walls. He had information that the south wall was not as thick as those facing west or north, so he decided to shift the majority of his basilisks to the south side of the citadel. In addition to the sustained fire of the basilisks, the Turks also positioned their mortars to fire into the citadel from the south side. The Turks also began shooting flaming arrows inside the fortress in an effort to terrorise the Greek residents.

However, the Hospitallers had a giant catapult inside the fortress, which they used to hurl massive stones down on the basilisk emplacements. In addition, the knights trained the guns inside the Tower of St Angelo against the Muslim siege works. D'Aubusson gathered teams to put out the fires started by the enemy's flaming arrows.

By the middle of July, the Turks had made considerable progress against the south wall. Their artillery had demolished a section of the

© Getty Images

Pierre d'Aubusson during the siege of Rhodes

OTTOMANS

Image source: wiki/Guillaume Caoursin

MESIH PASHA

While Mesih Pasha was a vizier to Mehmed II and later a grand vizier under his successor, he was born into the Byzantine Empire's ruling dynasty and converted to Islam under the Ottomans. His failure at Rhodes saw him temporarily stripped of his influence as vizier, but he continued to act as governor of Gallipoli.

Image source: wiki/Bilkent University

MEHMED II

The famous conqueror of Constantinople at the age of 21, Mehmed made the decision not to lead the Ottoman military in his attempt on Rhodes, another important step on his way to challenging the great powers of Europe. Some believe he was on his way to attack Rhodes again when he fell ill and died in 1481.

HOSPITALLERS

Image source: wiki/Adam & Morin

PIERRE D'AUBUSSON

Elected as the grand master of the Knights Hospitaller in 1476, D'Aubusson was born in a castle in France. It was under his leadership that the repairs and reinforcement of Rhodes took place, allowing it to withstand the onslaught of the Ottoman forces who had long been expected to invade.

Image source: wiki/Abbé Vertot

FABRIZIO DEL CARRETTO

While he would go on to become the 43rd grand master of the Knights Hospitaller, Carretto was in charge of the defence of the Tower of Saint Nicholas during the Siege of Rhodes, to whom d'Aubusson sent reinforcements in order to keep the key location from falling into Ottoman hands.

Image source: wiki/Library of Congress

GUILLAUME CAOURSIN

Vice-chancellor of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, Caoursin was an eye-witness to the Siege of Rhodes and one of the first to record the details of the conflict. He was later made ambassador to Pope Innocent VIII and apostolic secretary as Count Palatine.

faussebraye, as well as knocked down part of the main wall in the southeastern corner. To stretch the resources of the garrison, Mesih Pasha had deliberately retained a large number of troops and six basilisks on the north side. To split the Hospitaller forces, he often issued orders for simultaneous attacks on both the north and south walls.

The Italian contingent of the Hospitallers fought desperately to contain repeated assaults by Turkish infantry. Mesih Pasha held back his remaining janissaries for the point at which he felt his troops could fully exploit the breach.

D'Aubusson put hundreds of labourers, townspeople and peasants to work constructing a palisade in the Jewish quarter to plug the breach in the south wall.

After 37 days of constant bombardment and multiple assaults against both the north and south walls, Mesih Pasha was on the verge of raising the siege. But he decided to launch one more assault in which he would commit the last of his janissaries to the south wall.

On the morning of 27 July the assault began with irregular militia making the first charge and absorbing some of the missile fire from the Hospitallers, and then the fearsome janissaries surged forward. The fighting ebbed and flowed, but after most of the janissaries lay dead and dying on the ground in front of the palisade, the remaining Turks fell back to the safety of their trenches.

At that point, Mesih Pasha decided to raise the siege. But the Ottoman army remained in place for 11 days while he attempted to negotiate a truce with the Hospitallers. He offered them self-rule if they would agree to become vassals of the sultan, but the offer was no different than what Mehmed II had offered before the siege. D'Aubusson declined the offer. While the Ottoman army was breaking camp, D'Aubusson ordered a victory parade inside the citadel. It took the Turks ten days to load their equipment on their carracks and galleys. Some of their siege equipment built on site was burned instead. During the course of the 86-day siege, the Turks had fired 3,500 stone shots from their basilisks -they also lost 9,000 men during the course of the siege.

Just as the Ottoman fleet was sailing away a papal envoy handed D'Aubusson a letter from the pope in which the pontiff pledged additional military support. D'Aubusson was irked because he had implored the Papacy and secular rulers in western Europe for additional troops in the years preceding the siege and received none. In the final analysis, the martial Hospitallers had fought off the Turks by themselves, and therefore they alone took credit for the victory. When Mesih Pasha reported to Sultan Mehmed the outcome of the siege, the sultan flew into a rage. He immediately began plans to personally lead another armada against the Hospitallers at Rhodes, but he died in May 1481 before he could launch another siege.

01 Turks bombard the tower

The Ottomans establish a siege battery along the west shore of the galley harbour to bombard the Tower of St Nicholas, which guards the northern galley harbour. The Turkish commander wants to capture the tower in order to control the harbour.

02 Skirmishes at north wall

Knights Hospitaller artillerymen unleash counter-battery fire from the Tower of St Nicholas and the northern curtain wall in an attempt to knock out the Ottoman basilisks firing on the tower, while arquebusiers, archers and crossbowmen stationed in trenches at the base of the main wall hold back the Turkish infantry.

03 First assault on tower

After ten days of sustained bombardment, Turkish ships land hundreds of Ottoman regular and militia troops on the mole on 3 June where the Tower of St Nicholas is located. The Ottoman infantry fight hard but the Hospitallers repulse them.

04 Turks deploy siege tower

The Ottoman siege battery continues to bombard not only the Tower of St Nicholas, but also a newly constructed timber palisade on the mole. Meanwhile, the Turks construct a giant belfry, which serves as a platform for Ottoman archers to unleash a storm of arrows on Hospitallers defending the north walls of the fortress and the mole enclosing the galley harbour.

05 Turks attack across floating bridge

The Turks install a pontoon bridge between the shoreline and the far end of the mole under cover of darkness on the night of 18 June. The following morning, janissaries launch a ferocious assault on the rubble of the Tower of St Nicholas. Hospitaller knights, sergeants and mercenaries once again repulse the assault, and their cannon destroy the bridge.

06 Turks assail south wall

The Ottoman commander shifts the majority of his siege guns overland to the south side of the fortress to bombard the south walls. The siege guns are gradually advanced closer to the walls in zig-zag covered trenches. The heavy guns succeed in demolishing part of the wall near the southeast corner.

07 Hospitallers plug breach in south wall

The Turks try to exploit the breach in the outer wall, but they find that the Hospitallers have constructed a timber bulwark just inside the wall that effectively plugs the breach. The Turks launch repeated assaults in the first half of July, but they fail to break through the makeshift barrier.

08 Hospitallers rout Turks

The Ottoman commander commits his remaining janissary heavy infantry to an all-out attack through the breach in the south wall on 27 July. They furiously assail the timber bulwark defended by Hospitaller troops and their mercenary soldiers. A Hospitaller counterattack routs the Turks.

Map by: Rocio Espin

What If...

THE TITANIC HAD NOT SUNK?

She was the largest, most luxurious and supposedly safest ship afloat, but her loss was to change the course of history

Interview by David J Williamson

INTERVIEW WITH

DR AIDAN MCMICHAEL

Aidan is based in Belfast and is chairman of the Belfast Titanic Society, and co-edits its magazine. He is also chair of a monthly society talk programme to an international Titanic audience.

© Dr Aidan McMichael

Even before a single rivet had been hammered into place, RMS Titanic was destined for fame. Her owners, the White Star Line, ignored competitor Cunard's boasts of speed. Instead, they focussed on opulence and luxury to carry passengers from all walks of life across the Atlantic towards the American Dream. Titanic was the largest moving man-made object in the world, and public interest and expectation matched her colossal size. White Star staked its reputation on the ship – all Titanic had to do now was deliver on that promise.

What different events, circumstances or decisions prior to and during the voyage may have avoided disaster?

It is possible to see events around the Titanic as a gathering perfect storm. No one single thing may have been enough to either cause or avoid disaster, but with each event the pendulum swung further against Titanic and the odds of survival became stacked against her. It is in many ways a whole series of 'what ifs'. If Titanic's sister ship Olympic had not ludicrously collided with HMS Hawke in 1911 and needed repairing, taking workers away from the Titanic and delaying her completion, would she have sailed sooner and avoided her fate? If the fire that raged in one of her coal bunkers from the very start of the voyage had been put out sooner would there have been minimum damage to the bulkhead, leaving it more secure? If Captain Edward Smith had been more cautious after his collision on the Olympic with the navy ship instead of overly confident in the potential 'unsinkability' of the ships, would he have acted differently when captain of the Titanic? Would he have been more reserved with the speed of the vessel and its ability to react to danger? And then there are things which were always beyond the control of the captain and the White Star Line. The unusual weather in the Arctic in 1911 would lead to a larger volume of sea ice and, in particular, icebergs, protected for greater distances in a flow of cold Arctic water that pushed down towards the Gulf Stream. Not only were there more of them, but they were potentially bigger and more deadly to ships of all sizes, even the largest in the world. And what if, instead of handling countless personal messages for passengers, the operators in the radio room had heeded the warnings from other vessels in the area of the threat of sea ice and relayed this to the captain? Perhaps, despite the loss of face and reputation such a delay [from slowing down] would've caused, disaster could have been averted.

How important would Titanic have been to the growth of competitive trans-Atlantic travel?

Titanic, if she had survived, would have made the White Star Line a robust challenger to its rival Cunard and other shipping lines servicing the lucrative and busy North Atlantic run. Like all market

New York American
GREATER NEW YORK.
EDITION FOR
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 1912—24 PAGES
PRICE ONE CENT
ALL TITANIC SAVED ON CARPAT
NO HOPE LEFT; 1,535 DE
BERGS AND ICE-FIELD PHOTOGRAPHED LAST FRIDAY FROM STEAMSHIP NIAGARA IN LATITUDE 41.50, NEAR TITANIC'S GRAVE

Main image source: © Getty Images

© Alamy

RIGHT
News soon spread around the globe at the huge loss of life

merican
S. READ BY A MILLION

HIA

AD

THE PAST

1912

TIME FOR LUXURY

Having opted out of the speed race for crossing the Atlantic, White Star Line concentrated on luxury and the comfort of its passengers. The Olympic and Titanic were fitted to the highest standards, and not just for the wealthy. It was noted by 3rd class passengers that the facilities and finish below decks were far from basic and much more comfortable that many of White Star's competitors. Such an investment by White Star was not a coincidence: the rush to find new opportunities in the New World made 3rd class a very profitable enterprise for the company.

1911

LATE TO THE PARTY

It is ironic that the captain of Titanic, Edward Smith, was responsible for causing the delay of the ship's completion while he was captain of Titanic's sister vessel Olympic. Having collided with a navy warship following a botched manoeuvre by Smith, Olympic's repairs diverted workers away from Titanic's construction and delayed the completion and launch of the vessel. Such a change in plan placed the much-advertised maiden voyage of the world's largest ocean liner – and White Star's reputation – in jeopardy. It also dramatically changed the timings of her voyage, putting her in the wrong place at the wrong time.

1912

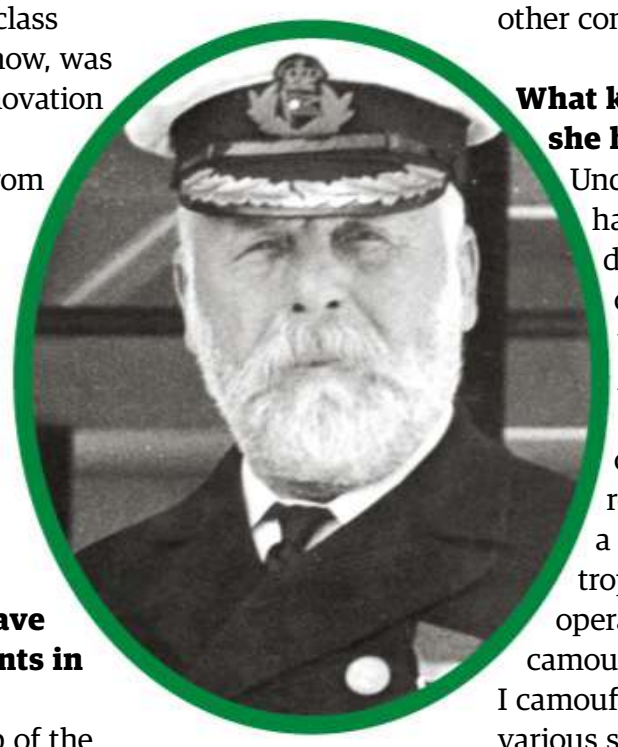
STAY OFF THE AIR

By 1912 the modern innovation of wireless was being used on trans-Atlantic crossings, and Titanic was no exception. The novelty for passengers was to send messages to friends and loved-ones ashore. The operators, who were paid by the wireless manufacturer Marconi, were overwhelmed. The closest vessel to Titanic, the SS Californian, messaged a warning of sea ice, only to be told to get off the air so more lucrative private messages could be sent. Following Titanic's radio distress signal, picked up by the Carpathia at 1.45am on 15 April, the last message from Titanic was: "Come as quickly as possible, old man, the engine room is filling up to the boilers."

competitors making money would have meant selling highly profitable rooms in Titanic's 1st class decks and ensuring they could max out on her 3rd class capacity. Competition, then as now, was regarded as healthy, driving innovation in technology and service improvement for passengers. From what we hear of her maiden voyage and survivor accounts of the days before the disaster, Titanic had surpassed 1st class passenger expectations, so she was indeed set to build a great service reputation and make money for her owners White Star Line.

How influential could she have been to promote developments in shipbuilding design?

Olympic was the actual flagship of the Olympic class – Titanic, her new sister and completed around a year later – was almost identical so her design features had already been showcased and marketed. This included the system of watertight compartments – 16 in all – which ran the length of the ship and were designed to minimise the threat of sinking even if the hull had been breached and the vessel took on water. Each compartment had a watertight door which could be closed manually, electronically from the bridge, or by a float switch should all else fail. Titanic was designed to take on water in up to four of these compartments without sinking. There was also one key feature that was different on Titanic compared with Olympic. Passengers on the North Atlantic crossing reported that they were cold while out strolling on their private deck. Harland & Wolff, the ship builder, listened to that feedback and introduced a partially enclosed deck – a good example of meeting your customers' expectations!



Captain Edward Smith was to perish aboard his ship

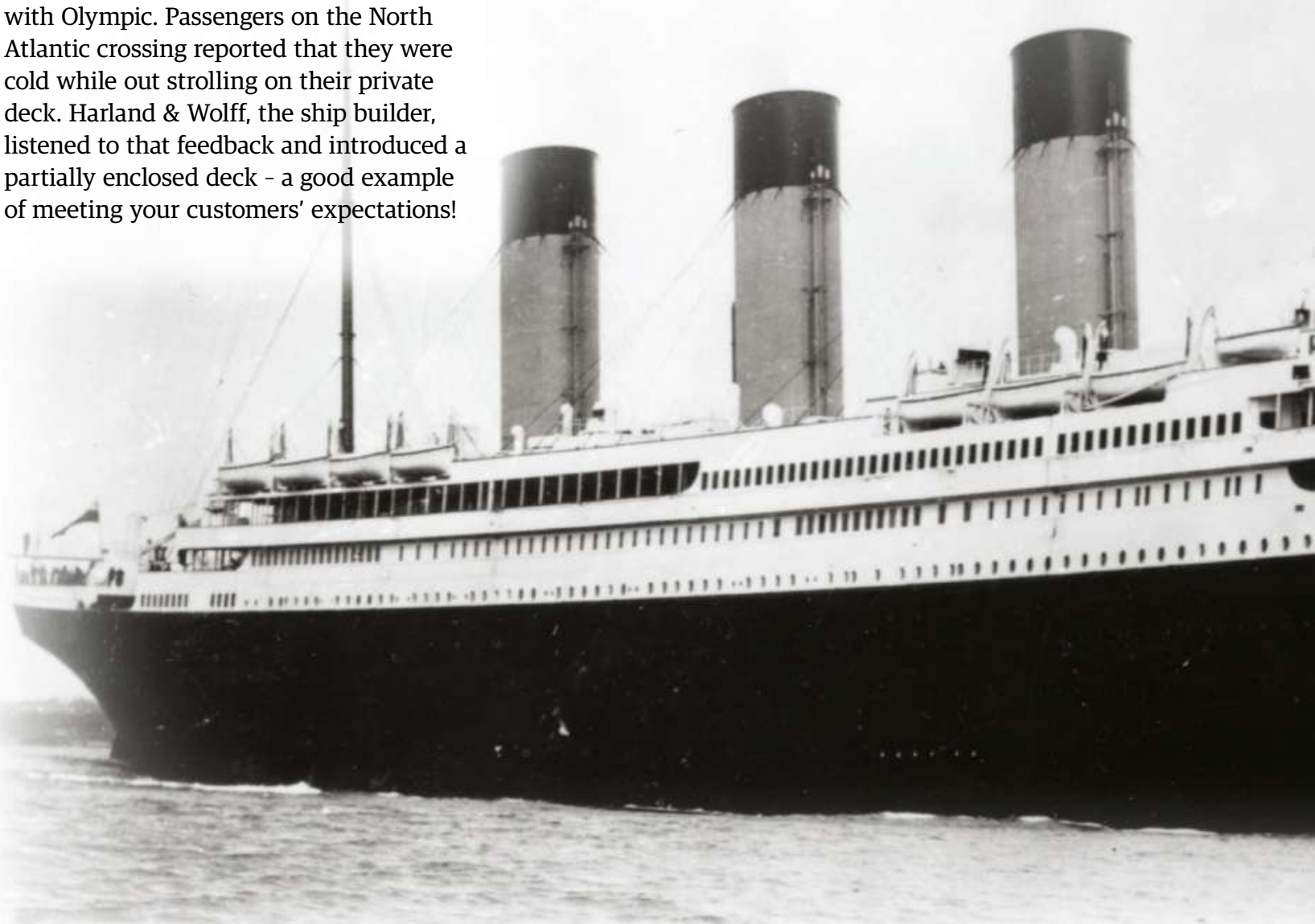
No doubt this innovation and her luxurious interiors, had she survived, would have been copied and imitated by other competitor shipping lines

What kind of First World War would she have had?

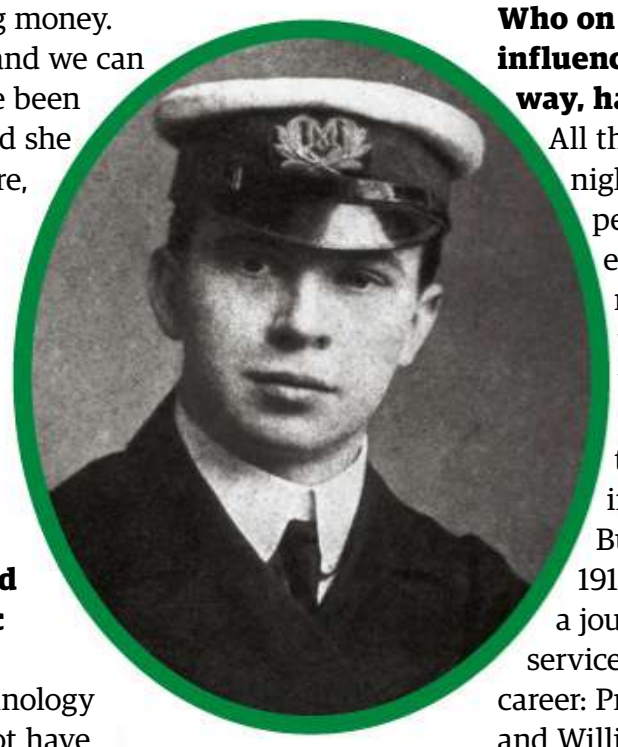
Undoubtedly Titanic would have had an interesting World War I due to her size and passenger capacity. She would have been a valuable resource for the British Admiralty possibly as a troop carrier, a hospital ship or a cargo carrier; and perhaps her pre-war reputation would have made her a prime target and propaganda trophy to any German U-boat. To operate safely she would have been camouflaged – a popular World War I camouflage was 'dazzle' – stripes in various shades of black, white and grey painted over decks, funnels and sides. Dazzle did not directly conceal a ship but ensured the enemy would find it difficult to estimate range, speed and heading. Each ship's dazzle patterns were unique to avoid making classes of ships instantly recognisable to the enemy. What would seafarers have made of seeing Titanic in dazzle camo?

What do you think would have been her final fate and why?

Like Titanic's sister ship Olympic, and like all great liners of their day, she would most likely have been sent to the breakers yard as scrap. The great Atlantic liners were always updated and replaced as technology advanced – later, for example,



there was a move away from coal burning to new diesel technology with cleaner and more efficient engines requiring fewer crew and therefore saving money. Olympic was scrapped in 1929 and we can take a guess Titanic would have been scrapped a year later in 1930 had she survived. One wonders, therefore, with the materials saved from the scrapping of Titanic, would there be hotels and bars with wood panelling from Titanic's opulent smoking room?



Jack Phillips, Titanic's wireless operator, remained at his post and perished

What changes in maritime safety happened because of the disaster? Changes that may have been hindered or never happened if Titanic hadn't sunk?

There are a number of key technology and safety features that may not have happened as early as 1912, including lifeboat numbers and wider use of radio at sea. The founding of the International Ice Patrol in the North Atlantic was most likely brought forward by the Titanic disaster. The scale of the disaster created sufficient public support on both sides of the Atlantic to prompt a working-together approach which lead to the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) convention in 1914. This led to the founding of the ice patrol run by the US Coastguard, which continues to provide information and iceberg warnings for shipping. Countless lives lost through iceberg incidents have been avoided all because of the Titanic tragedy.

Who on board may have had an influence on history, even in a small way, had they survived?

All the people on board Titanic on the night of 15 April 1912 were 'ordinary people who were about to lead extraordinary lives'. There were many American industrialists whose death it may be said would have some influence on their businesses and in turn the economy. In addition, one individual in particular, Archibald Butt (26 September 1865 – 15 April 1912), was a US Army officer and a journalist. Crucially he provided service to two US Presidents during his career: Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William Taft. At one stage Butt was Taft's de facto chief negotiator on Federal budget issues. Previously he had been Roosevelt's closest companion while in office. Being such an influential character in the life of these US presidents one wonders would the course of history in the USA or even the world have been different if Butt had lived? Would Butt have helped maintain relations with Roosevelt and perhaps prevented Roosevelt's direct challenge to Taft – the founding of the Progressive Party which split the vote and thereby allowed Woodrow Wilson to be elected? Now that would have changed history!

BELOW
Titanic was to be the pride of the White Star Line

BELOW-INSET
Titanic survivors photographed from the rescue ship Carpathia

THE POSSIBILITY

1912-30

THE QUEEN OF THE OCEAN

If Titanic had survived her maiden voyage she would have dominated the trans-Atlantic passenger trade. What she would not have been able to avoid was World War I, and she would've been a prime target for German U-boats. After WWI she would have continued to transport passengers from all walks of life to and fro across the Atlantic for many years to come, with the comfort and reliability that the White Star Line prided itself upon.

1912-30

TAKE OFF DELAYED

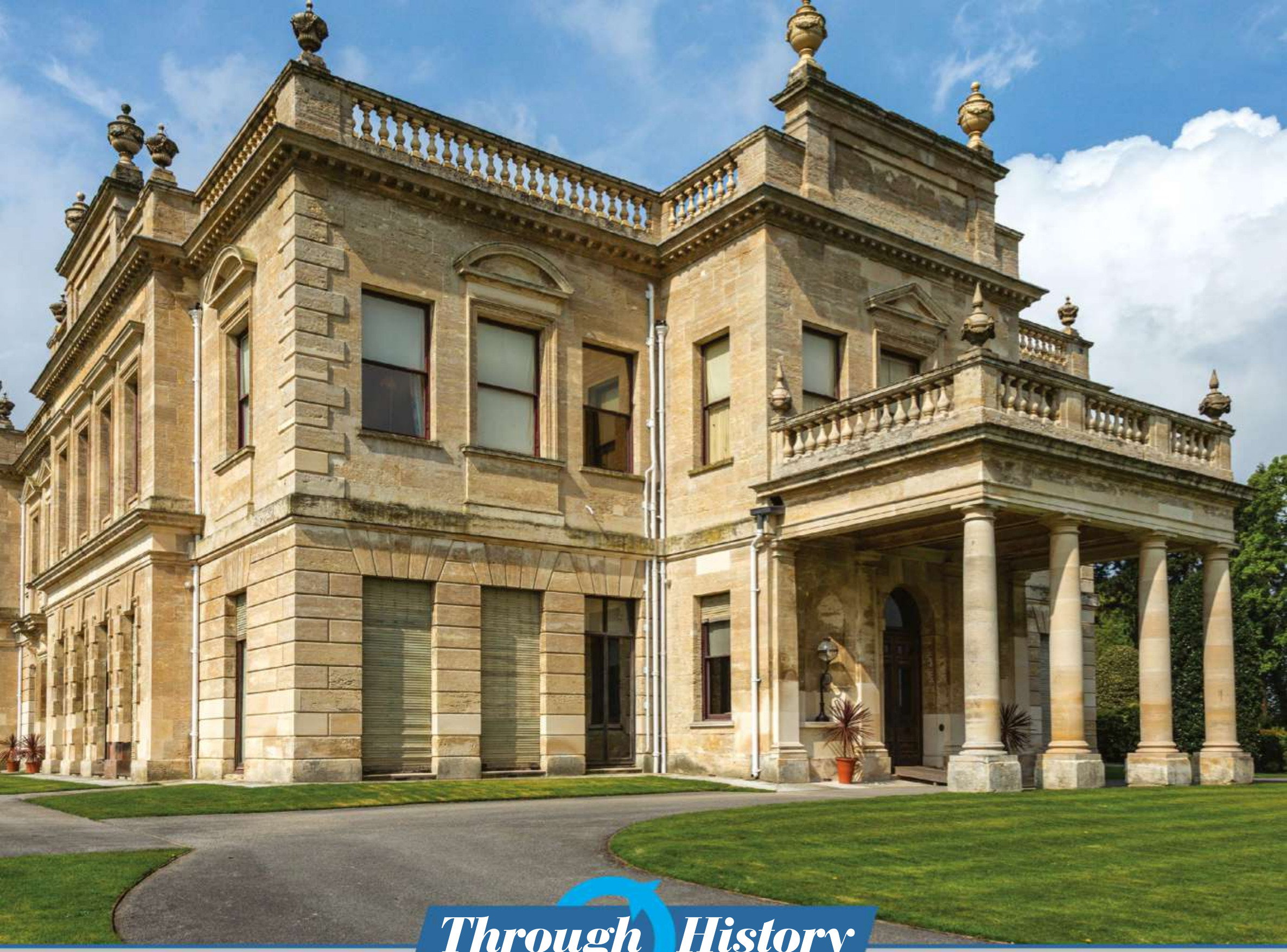
The first flight by the Wright brothers preceded Titanic by only nine years, and yet by her maiden voyage aircraft innovation had changed dramatically. However distance, size and cost were to keep commercial passenger-carrying aircraft very much a dream until at least two decades after Titanic sank. Had she survived, she would've definitely played a part in meeting the needs of mass transportation around the world, a scale of demand that could not have been met by even the most ambitious airline.

1912 – PRESENT

AMERICAN HEART AND MUSCLE

There were a number of high-ranking, high-flying and influential American industrialists and businessmen who died in the disaster. Had they survived, they would surely have continued to influence and drive the economy and infrastructure of the United States in its evolution as a world-leading economic power. The richest on board was John Jacob Astor, but the list of those lost includes railway executives, a mining magnate, a steel magnate and Isidor and Ida Straus – owners of Macy's department stores. But most passengers were ordinary people and we can only guess at how, had they lived, they may have in their own way changed the world.

All images: © Alamy



Through History

CELEBRATING ROYAL JUBILEES AND CORONATIONS

These commemorative objects are just some of the fascinating artefacts kept in Brodsworth Hall's collection

Opening image: © Alamy
All images courtesy of: English Heritage

On 21 April 1926, a girl was born in Mayfair, London, to the duke and duchess of York. Princess Elizabeth Alexandra Mary was then the third in line to the British throne after her uncle and father. It was never thought that she would one day be queen, as it was expected that Edward VIII would marry and have his own heir who would inherit the throne. However, when King Edward abdicated in December 1936, having only been the monarch since the previous January, the duke of York became King George VI and Elizabeth the heir to the throne. On 6 February 1952, Elizabeth was proclaimed Queen after the death of her father. Seventy years later, Queen Elizabeth II is still on the throne, having recently celebrated her Platinum Jubilee in June. She is now the longest-reigning British monarch.

At Brodsworth Hall near Doncaster, objects associated with a variety of royal occasions have been on display to the public to celebrate the Queen's 70 years on the throne. Belonging to the last generations of residents at Brodsworth, these artefacts span the reigns of several British monarchs. The items are part of a wider collection of fascinating objects kept at the Victorian country estate.

CORONATION NEWSPAPERS

To mark the occasion of Queen Elizabeth II's coronation, *The Times* published special supplements to cover the event. The supplements featured the history of royalty and the crown in Great Britain, as well as the details of the coronation.

COMMEMORATIVE BADGE

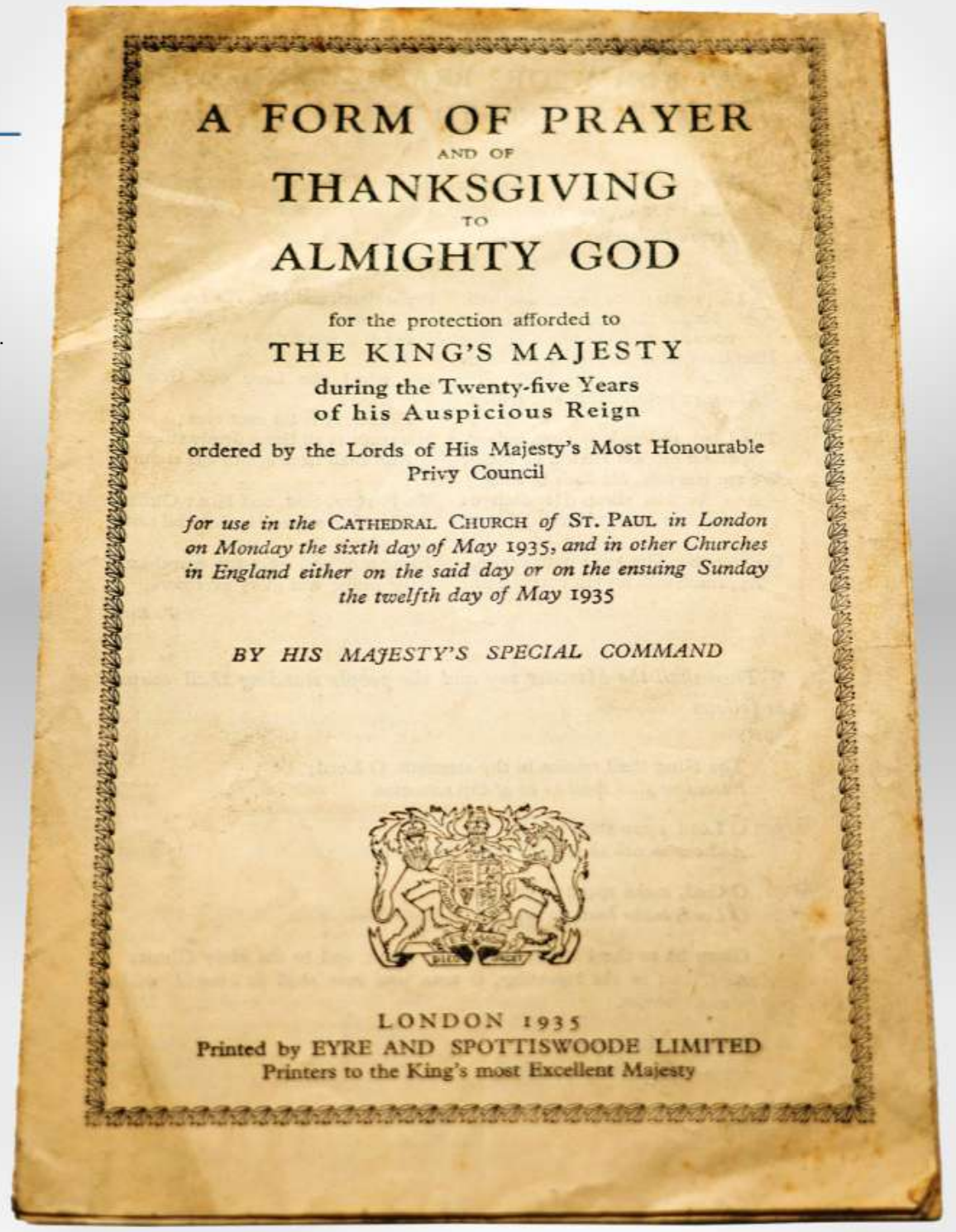
This badge, attached to a ribbon, was created as a souvenir for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth's grandparents, George V and Queen Mary, in 1911. King George died in 1936 while Queen Mary died a few months before Elizabeth II's coronation.

ROYAL CUPPA

This earthenware mug was produced to celebrate the coronation of George V and Queen Mary. Featuring portraits of the two monarchs, the traditional motto of the British monarch 'Dieu et mon droit' ('God and my right') is also present.

PRAYER PAMPHLET

Published for the Silver Jubilee of King George V in 1935, this prayer pamphlet was used in thanksgiving church services to celebrate the king's 25 years on the throne. The main service took place in St Paul's Cathedral in London.

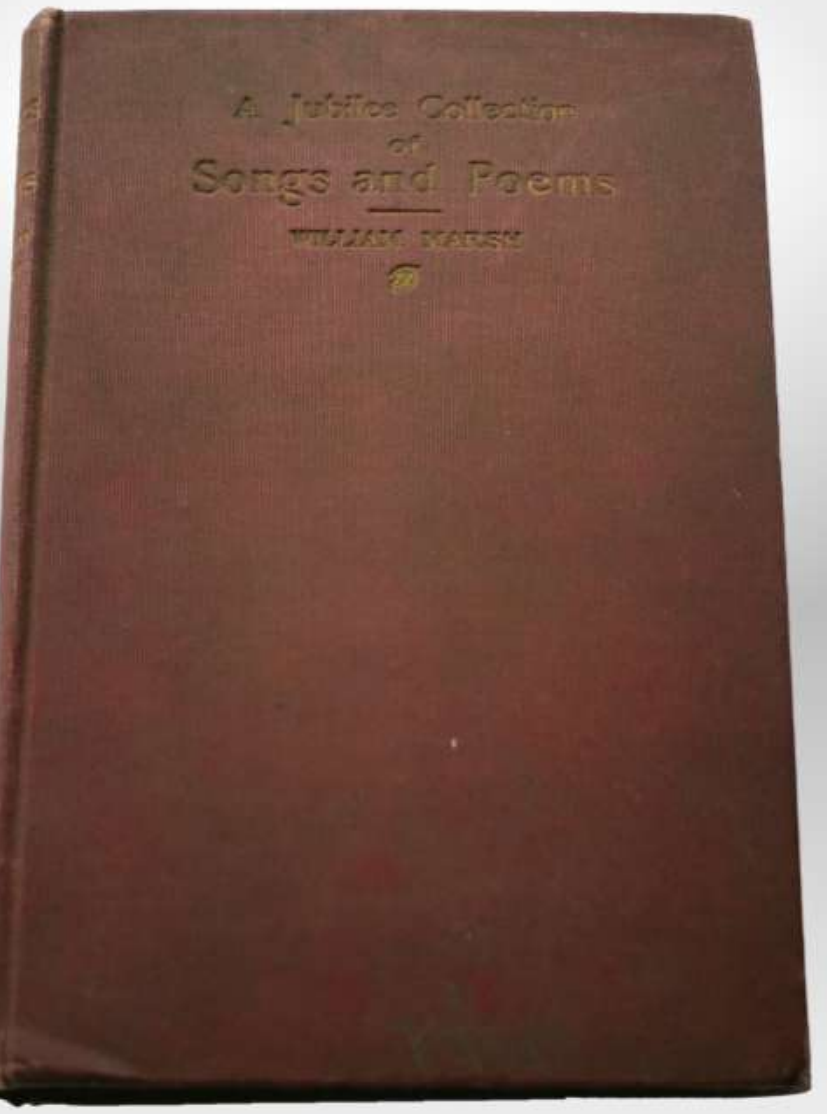

A FORM OF PRAYER
AND OF
THANKSGIVING
TO
ALMIGHTY GOD
for the protection afforded to
THE KING'S MAJESTY
during the Twenty-five Years
of his Auspicious Reign
ordered by the Lords of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council
for use in the CATHEDRAL CHURCH *of* ST. PAUL *in London on Monday the sixth day of May* 1935, *and in other Churches in England either on the said day or on the ensuing Sunday the twelfth day of May* 1935
BY HIS MAJESTY'S SPECIAL COMMAND
LONDON 1935
Printed by EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE LIMITED
Printers to the King's most Excellent Majesty

CHINA BELL

Made by Royal Grafton, this bone china bell commemorated Queen Elizabeth II's Silver Jubilee in 1977. The bell features a picture of the Queen alongside the royal coat of arms.

SONGS AND POEMS

Originally owned by Peter Thellusson of Brodsworth Hall, this anthology of songs and poems by William Marsh was published to mark the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1897. This jubilee celebrated 60 years of Victoria being on the throne.


A Jubilee Collection
of
Songs and Poems
WILLIAM MARSH

CORONATION PROGRAMME

▲ This programme was available as a souvenir of the coronation of Elizabeth II, on 2 June 1953. Published by King George's Jubilee Trust, the programme was approved by the Queen and featured the route of the coronation procession through London.

COMMEMORATIVE PENCIL

▼ To mark the Silver Jubilee of King George V in 1935, schoolchildren throughout the UK were given an inscribed mechanical pencil. This is an example of the ones given to the children at Brodsworth School.

REVIEWS

The books, TV shows and films causing a stir in the history world this month

2x © Alamy

FRIEDA

This 1947 classic about post-war anti-German sentiment in Britain makes its Blu-ray debut

Certificate: 12 **Director:** Basil Dearden **Cast:** Mai Zetterling, David Farrar, Glynis Johns **Released:** Out now

Although best remembered for light comedies such as *The Man in the White Suit* (1951) and *Passport to Pimlico* (1949), Ealing Studios also made a number of dramas and were not ones to shy away from serious social issues.

Following the end of World War II, anti-German sentiment was still high and there were questions as to whether the country and its people could ever move on. *Frieda* is a film that examines these attitudes in Britain shortly before and immediately after the end of the war. The film follows the title character (Mai Zetterling), a young German woman who arrives in England with one Robert Dawson (David Farrar) to become his wife. As well as contending with the small-town English locals, Frieda must also deal with her brother, still a committed Nazi who believes that Germany should rise from the ashes and go to war again.

The film is directed by Basil Dearden, who despite helming 1960's crime caper *The League of Gentleman* and oddities such as *The Mind Benders* (1963), remains best known for his films with a social message. Perhaps the most famous of these is 1961's *Victim*, which explored the law against homosexuality, and in some ways *Frieda* can be seen as something of a precursor to these works. Like *Victim*, characters have long discussions that are more debates concerning actual social problems than they are conversations. Whereas *Victim* uses the guise of a crime thriller in order to address its topic, *Frieda* is a romantic drama with the odd melodramatic touch. However, despite being well-meaning in its message *Frieda* is far less successful than Dearden's later film.

Mostly this is due to issues with the script. The story unrolls at an incredibly leisurely pace, even compared to other films of the time. Frieda's brother, a key character who brings many of the issues that have been bubbling under the surface to the forefront, is not introduced until the final half hour. And some plot elements concerning one character's romantic feelings for another don't really receive any direct resolution.

The film can be something of a slog, though the production design of Michael Relph, cinematography of Gordon Dines and art direction of Jim Morahan contain enough noir-esque visual flourishes to ensure that our attention never fully wanes. The cast are also on fine form, with Zetterling portraying the complex emotional struggle of the title character admirably. Farrar and Flora Robson are equally memorable as Frieda's husband and an anti-German MP respectively.

Studiocanal Vintage Classics have put their all into this new Blu-ray release, and the film looks gorgeous thanks to a crystal-clear restoration. It also has a number of extras, including an interview with historian Matthew Sweet and a short feature discussing the making of the film.

Frieda is well-made and intriguing, if not a wholly successful movie. However, what it may lack as pure entertainment it more than makes up for as a historical artefact. It's a time capsule of how late-1940s Britain was coming to terms with the horrors of World War II and how to move forward. ***CM***

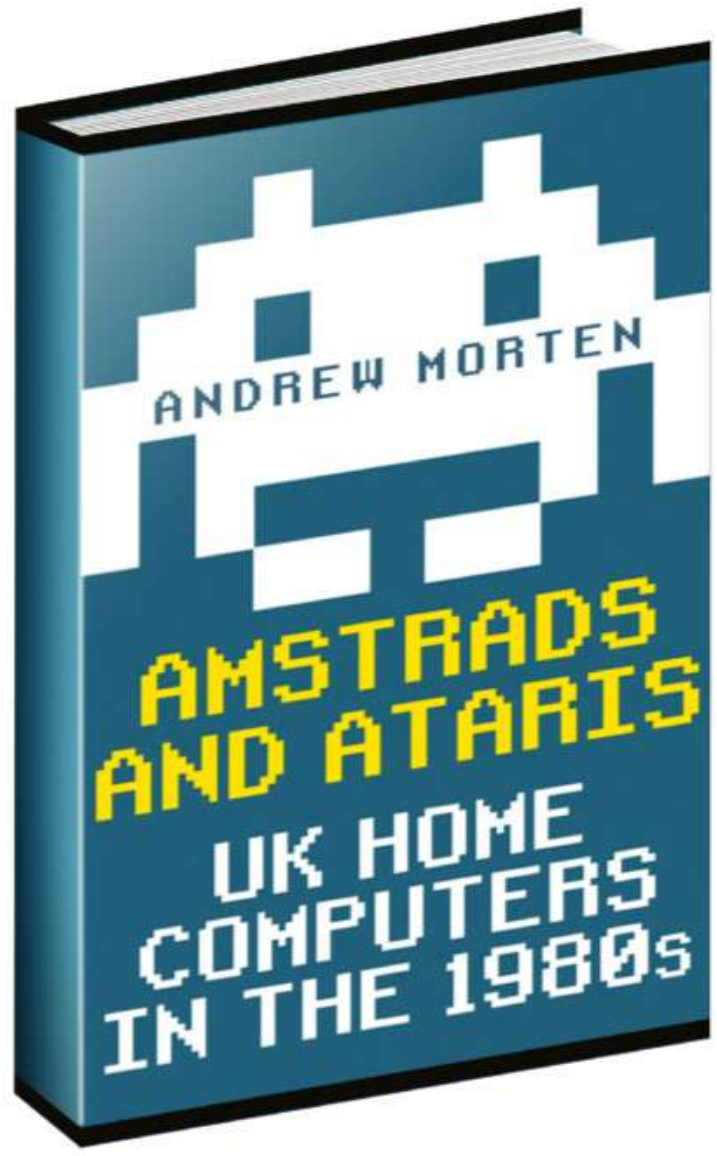
★★★☆☆

Reviews by
Callum McKelvie, Jonathan Gordon, Emily Staniforth

AMSTRADS AND ATARIS

Tracing the origins of the home computer in Britain

Author: Andrew Morten **Publisher:** Amberly **Price:** £15.99 **Released:** 15 August



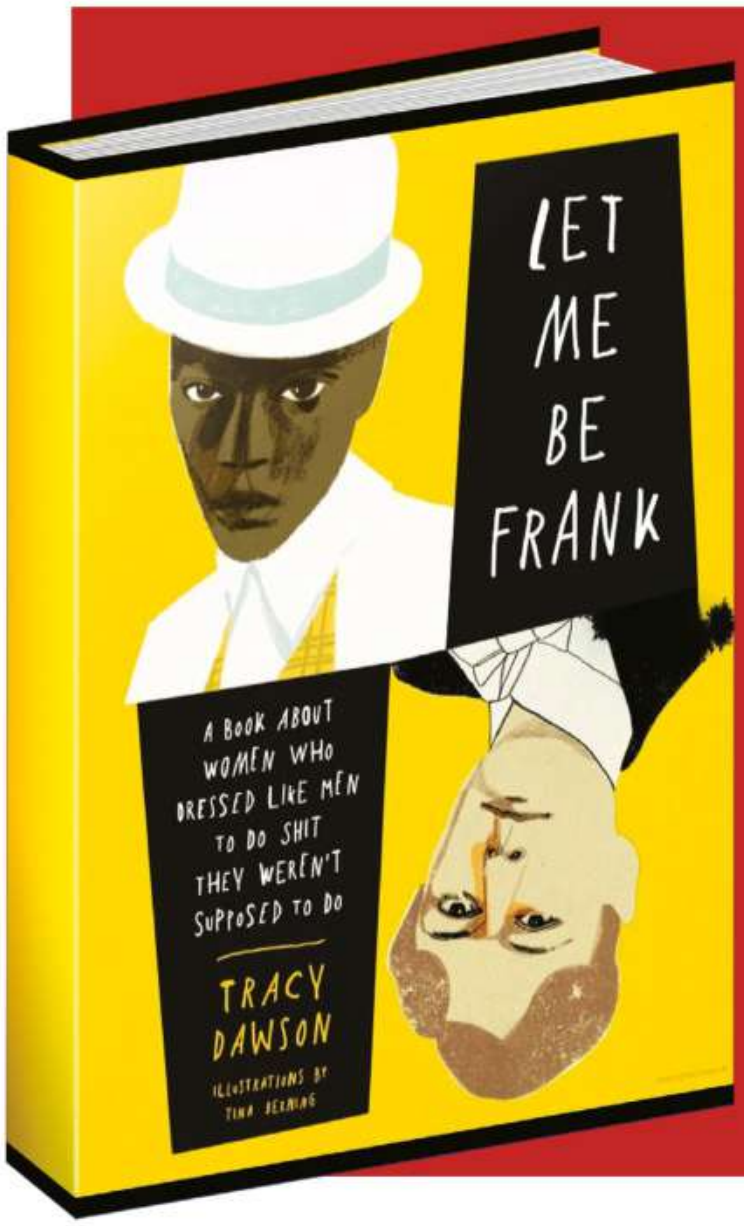
No device can be said to have changed the world in the last 50 years as much as the home computer. Today, shopping, work and leisure are among a variety of things that can be done at home thanks to laptops, desktops, smartphones and tablets. Andrew Morten's new book, *Amstrads and Ataris*, tells the story of how the home computer developed in the UK, as well as detailing the people behind the various companies.

Computers have a reputation for being hard to understand for those who are not well versed in tech speak. As such, potential readers would be forgiven for being put off by the thought that they might find themselves confused by some of the more tech-heavy talk. However, Morten speaks in terms clearly designed for the everyman and not just the initiated. Admittedly he does go into areas such as processing power and other technical details, but the simple yet engaging writing style ensures that readers will be able to follow.

Morten tackles his subject company by company, which makes a complex topic like this a lot more digestible and easier to follow. He does not, however, forget to contextualise his subject and weave a narrative of the competition and relationship between the various companies. The text is supplemented by a wealth of images, including photographs and original publicity materials.

An accessible guide to a subject that should be of interest to everyone due to its tremendous impact on the world we now find ourselves in, *Amstrads and Ataris* comes highly recommended. ***CM***

★★★★☆


LET ME BE FRANK
A BOOK ABOUT WOMEN WHO DRESSED LIKE MEN TO DO SHIT THEY WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO DO
TRACY DAWSON
ILLUSTRATIONS BY TINA BERNING

LET ME BE FRANK

An entertaining encounter with some extraordinary women

Author: Tracy Dawson **Publisher:** Harper Design **Price:** £20 **Released:** Out now

Tracy Dawson's *Let Me Be Frank: A Book About Women Who Dressed Like Men To Do Shit They Weren't Supposed To Do* is a warm, funny and inspiring read. It is also a truly staggering book that shows the extent to which women have been marginalised throughout history, and the measures they've had to resort to in order to make their way in the world.

The author's admiration for the women she's written about is evident throughout and her enthusiasm is infectious. Beginning with an anecdote about her own struggles as a woman in a man's world, she explains how and why she was inspired to tell the stories of the 'rule-breaking' women who would not accept the boundaries placed on them by a patriarchal society.

Each woman (or group of women) has their own dedicated chapter that poignantly tells their stories. From the infamous tales of Pharaoh Hatshepsut and Joan of Arc to lesser-known figures like Rena 'Rusty' Kanokogi and Catalina de Erauso, Dawson brings a group of diverse but equally-defiant women into the spotlight.

Accompanied by beautiful illustrations by Tina Berning, Dawson's informal writing style is refreshing in the context of a work of historical non-fiction. She highlights women who deserve to be remembered by history in such an awe-inspiring way that it is impossible not to feel impressed by their mettle. Dawson's humour, peppered throughout the book, makes *Let Me Be Frank* an entertaining read from start to finish. ***ES***

★★★★½

DOWNLOAD A FREE 10-PAGE PREVIEW OF NEW BOOK HITLER'S WINTER

Hitler's Winter: The German Battle of the Bulge, available now from Osprey Publishing, explores the German perspective of the Nazis' final major offensive in the European theatre. **All About History** readers can access an exclusive 10-page preview of Hitler's Winter.

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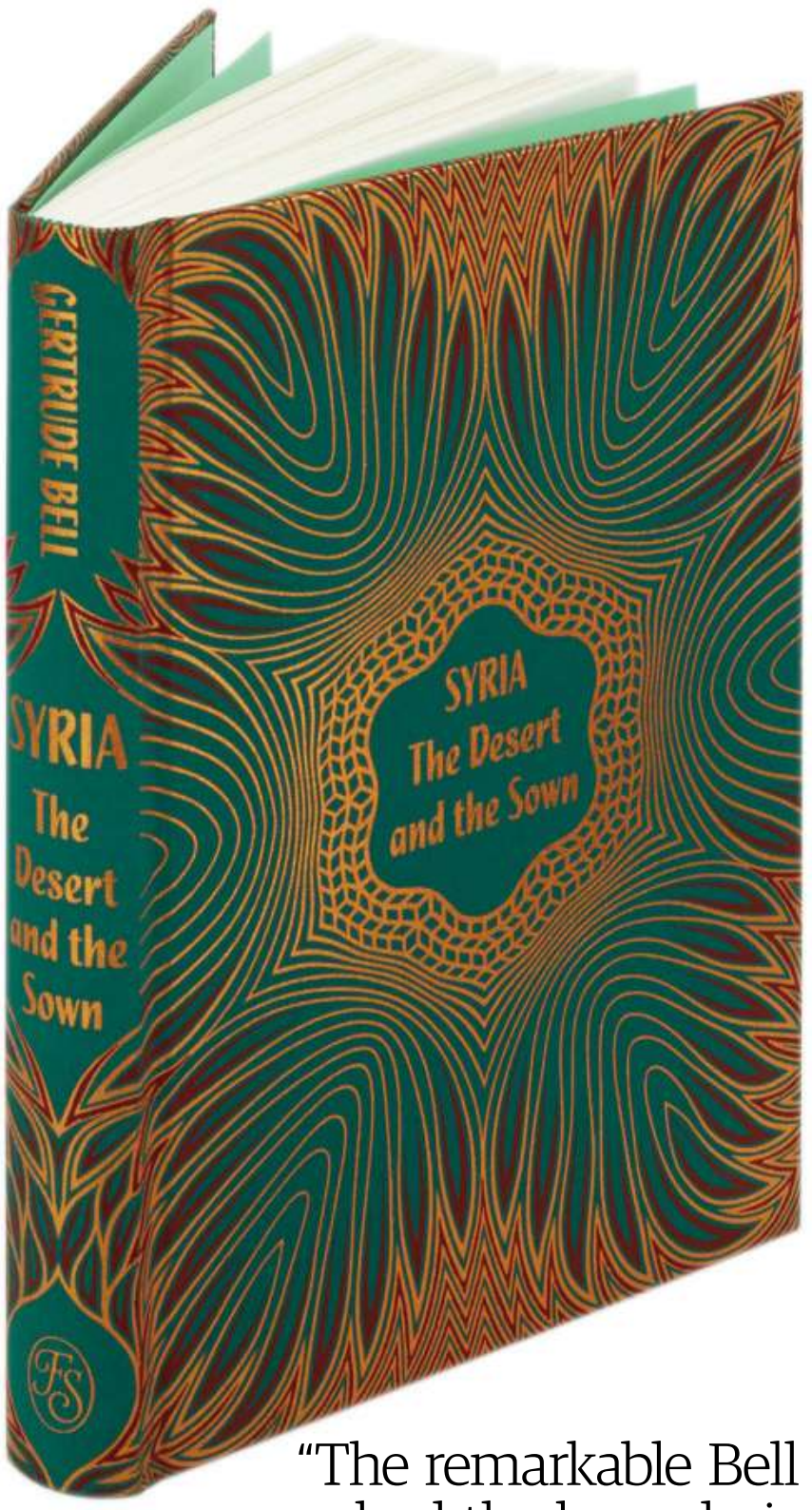
SYRIA: THE DESERT AND THE SOWN

An early 20th century snapshot of the Middle East, British imperial thinking and more

Authors: Gertrude Bell **Publisher:** Folio Society **Price:** £80 **Released:** Out now



"The remarkable Bell pushed the boundaries of travel writing"

Gertrude Bell's travels around what we might now call Greater Syria in 1906 are a remarkable tale on many levels. For a start, we get to see a snapshot of this region at the turn of the 20th century, as the Ottoman Empire still stands and as British imperial interest is receding. A remarkable woman of her time, pushing the boundaries of travel writing while also breaking new ground for herself, there are many intriguing layers to Bell's *Syria*.

For a start, it's worth knowing a little something of the author, who reveals little of herself in her own work. She had travelled all across the Middle East in the late 19th century and had immersed herself in Arabic language, poetry and archaeology. Bell was also the first and only woman to serve as oriental secretary in the British government in 1917, helping to draw the borders of modern-day Iraq. She would be based in Iraq until her death in 1926.

Hopefully what this background portrait gives you is a sense of the woman behind the words: someone of means, education and aptitude. This also comes across in the book, where her writing can often have a condescending, imperialistic tone to it, not uncommon for people of her era (her contemporary TE Lawrence could be accused of the same). She can generalise in broad strokes about certain castes of people. There remains, however, a clear warmth and empathy towards the region from Bell that frequently touches on admiration.

Syria is an interesting mix of different elements. Part travel diary, part adventure story, part book of archaeology and anthropology, Bell is very good at detailing every last ruin, person and dune she crosses. All of this is accompanied by photographs taken by Bell as she went. These can vary in quality, but they are a remarkable collection in their own right. The unpolished nature is actually quite thrilling, having the feel of holiday snapshots. This is modern Israel and Palestine, Syria and Lebanon as they were in this moment, unadorned, without flourish or artifice.

Attempting to track the exact route of Bell's fascinating journey from the text alone would be challenging, but thankfully this Folio edition comes packaged with a fold-out map, also presented in its own hardback cover. As you discover looking at the map with Bell's route marked out, it was not always the most linear journey as encounters and intrigue took her in new and unexpected directions.

While sometimes Bell's attitudes can jar a little with the modern reader, there can be no denying the quality of her work. She keeps a certain distance from her subject but there are small moments of colour and humour in her writing, often self-deprecating, that stand out. As an historical document of both the region and the thinking of British intellectuals at this time, *Syria* is a fascinating read. ***JG***

★★★★☆

HISTORY VS HOLLYWOOD

Fact versus fiction on the silver screen

THE KILLING FIELDS

Director: Roland Joffé **Starring:** Sam Waterston, Haing S Ngor, John Malkovich **Country:** Cambodia **Released:** 1984

A powerful tale of friendship and conflict journalism in Cambodia

VERDICT: Incredible accuracy and commitment to detail amid a compelling and shocking true story

01 The film follows *New York Times* journalist Sydney Schanberg (Waterston) and his fixer in Cambodia Dith Pran (Ngor) as they cover American actions in the country. Attention to detail was paramount – even the typeface in Schanberg's visa is correct.

02 The Khmer Rouge launched a coup, forcing foreigners to leave. Schanberg attempts to get Pran out with a forged passport. This is true, although dramatised with a desperate scramble for a photo. In reality, it was just a bad forgery and Pran remained in Cambodia.

03 Time is compressed here, with Pran quickly put to work in the fields of the new collective farms. At first he actually disguised himself as a taxi driver for a while. Schanberg, meanwhile, won a Pulitzer Prize, depicted in the film as an AIFPC award.

04 Not shown in the film are Pran's many jobs from 1975 to 1979, which included being a chief in his old home town for a short while. His journey to this region is compressed and includes the titular killing fields he described, recreated pretty accurately by the film.

05 Schanberg described the guilt he felt in his book *The Death and Life of Dith Pran* and how he spent years looking for information on Pran's whereabouts. He eventually gets word he's reached a refugee camp and they are reunited, just as the film shows.

Main image: © Alamy
5x inset image source: Goldcrest Films

Did you know?

The ability to use anything in pottage not only made it a popular meal for peasants but also with the nobility, who would add meat and spices to the dish

Main image: © Getty Images
Inset image: © Getty Images

VEGETABLE POTTAGE

MEDIEVAL PEASANTS' VEGETABLE STEW, ENGLAND, MIDDLE AGES

Ingredients

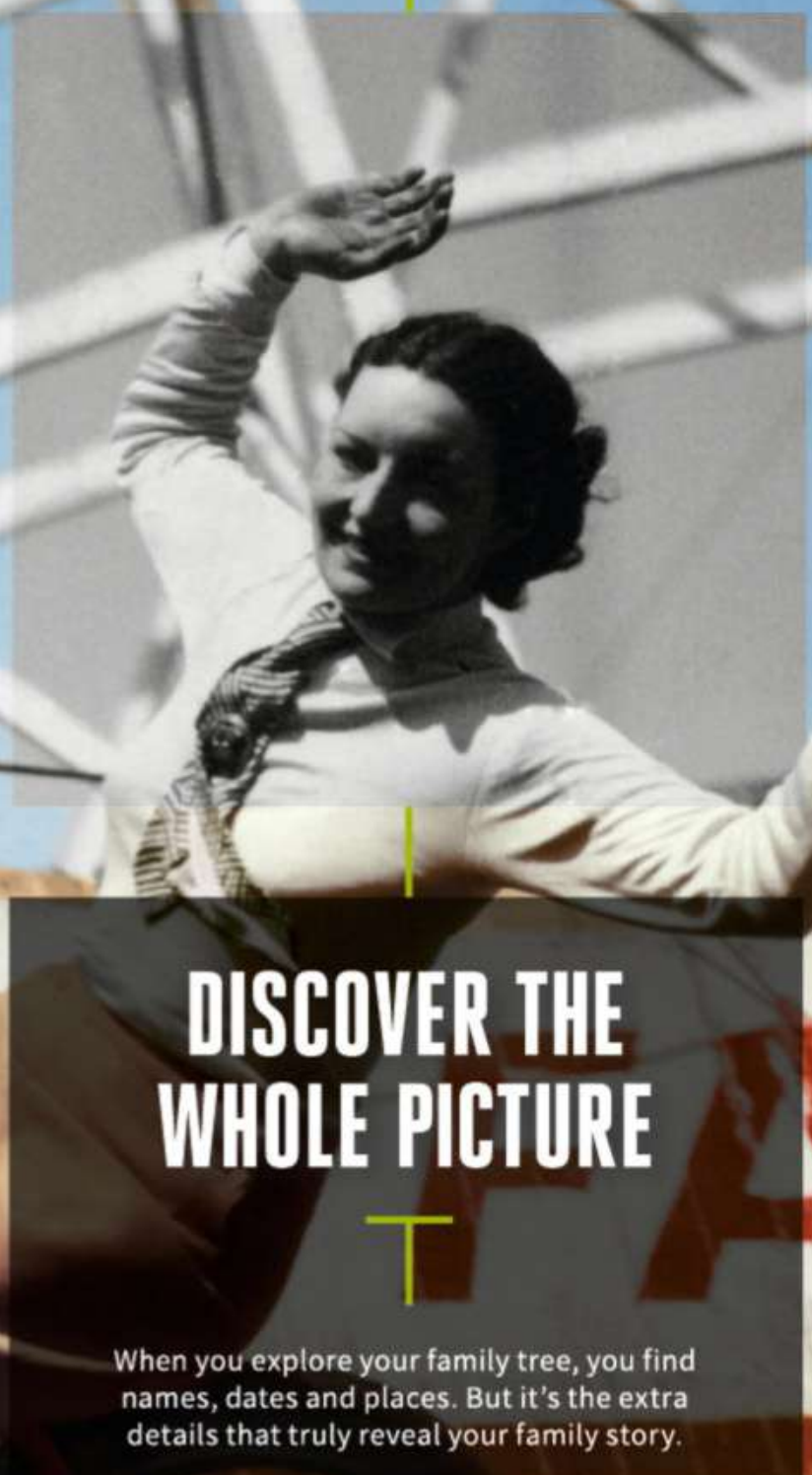
- 2 tbsp olive/vegetable oil
- 2 small white onions
- 50g carrot
- 50g parsnip
- 50g swede
- 250g cabbage
- 30g mushrooms
- 50g leeks
- 1 tsp dried rosemary
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 litre vegetable stock
- 100g lentils, washed
- 1 can cannellini beans, drained
- 80g rolled oats
- Salt and pepper

Peasants in medieval England were not able to afford the luxury of meat and fish in their diet very often. They relied on what they could grow on their own land, which usually meant cooking with vegetables and grains. One staple dish was pottage, a stew that could be made with a variety of vegetables and would often be eaten alongside homemade bread. This recipe is made up of the kinds of vegetables that might have been used by medieval peasants, but feel free to replace or add to any of the ingredients, using what is already in your kitchen.

METHOD

01 Pour the oil into a large saucepan or stewing pot and heat.
02 Dice all the vegetables.
03 Place the onion, carrot, parsnip and swede into the pan and cook until the vegetables have softened slightly.
04 Then add the cabbage, mushrooms and leeks to the pot and cook until all the vegetables have softened.
05 Add the rosemary, thyme and bay leaf to the pan and stir well.
06 Add the vegetable stock to the pan and bring to a simmer.
07 Add the lentils and beans to the pan and simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally to make sure the stew doesn't stick to the pan.
08 After 30 minutes, add salt, pepper and the oats to the pan and gently simmer for another 20 minutes.
09 After 20 minutes, remove the bay leaf from the pan.
10 Serve in bowls with crusty bread.

NEXT MONTH TUDOR RIVALRY: MARY VS ELIZABETH ON SALE 11 AUGUST



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*Record collections subject to change.

'Anthony Tucker-Jones's study of these battles is timely and important.'

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'What a brilliant book… superb storytelling that achieves a skilful balance between drama and detail.'

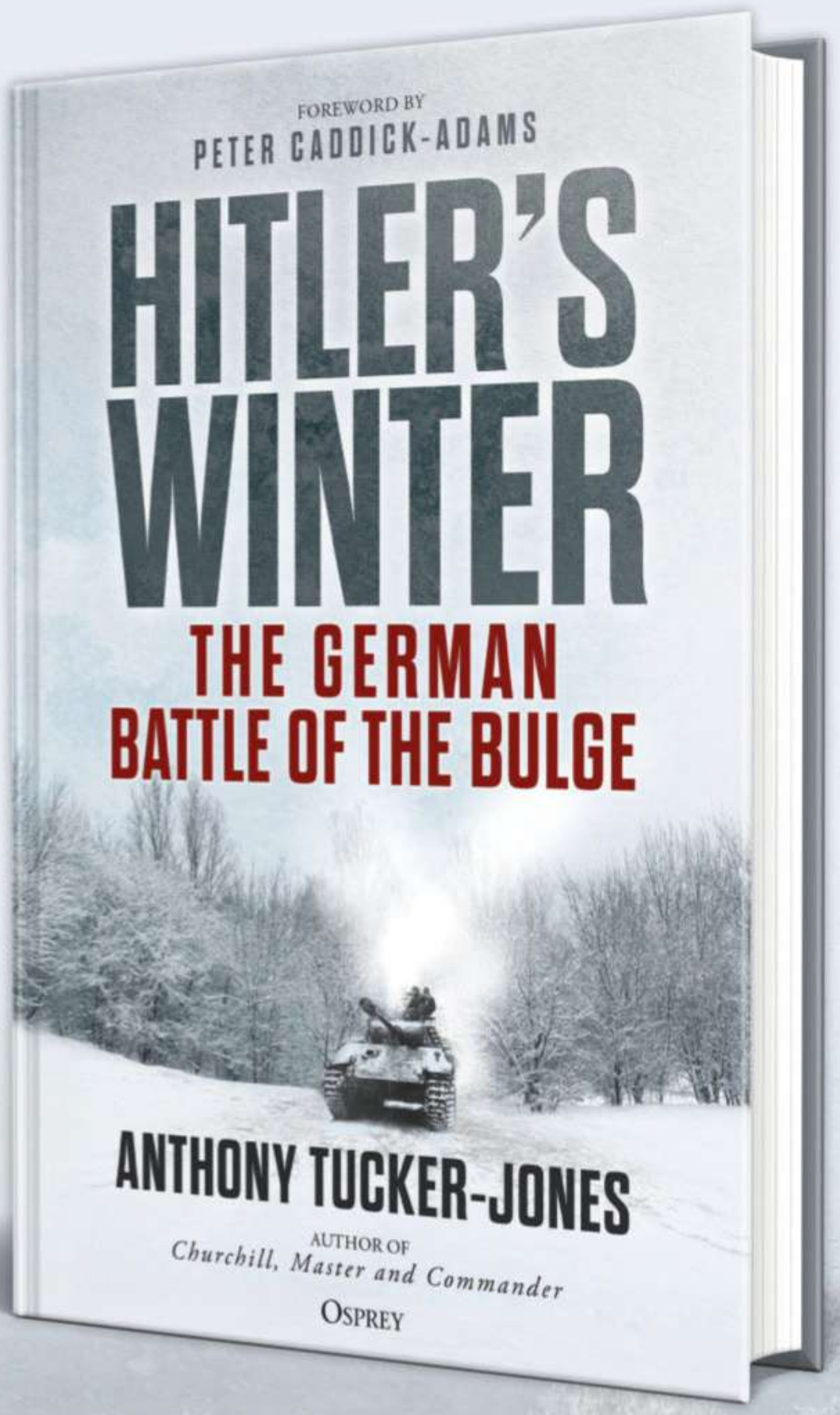
JAMES HOLLAND
Author of *Brothers in Arms*

ANTHONY TUCKER-JONES

FOREWORD BY
PETER CADDICK-ADAMS

Hitler's Winter provides a fresh view on one of the most famous battles of World War II.

In his new book, Anthony Tucker-Jones draws on the latest research to tell the story of the Battle of the Bulge from the German perspective.



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